

H. Lefanu

L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E;

CONTAINING

A GREAT VARIETY OF ORIGINAL INFORMATION
CONCERNING THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS
THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THAT COUNTRY IN
THE YEARS 1790, 1791, 1792, AND 1793.

BY HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

The Correspondence of DUMOURIER with PACHE, the
War Minister, and with the Commissaries.—Letters
of BOURNONVILLE, MIRANDA, VALENCE, &c. &c.

V O L. II.

D U B L I N:

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

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The concluding letter is by a third person ; but as it contained a very interesting disquisition concerning the popular topics of the times, the publisher conceived he could not render a more acceptable service to the publisher of these volumes than to insert it.

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LETTER

L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E.

L E T T E R I.

PARIS, *January 25, 1793.*

DEAR SIR,

THE event which has this week taken place in Paris, will no doubt furnish you with ample matter for speculation. Imagination contemplates with an over-whelming emotion, that extraordinary vicissitude of fortune which conducted Lewis the Sixteenth from the radiant Palace of Versailles, to the gloomy Tower of the Temple—from the first

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throne

throne of Europe, to the scaffold and the block—while the feelings of the heart, which run a faster pace than the reasonings of the head, reject for a while all calculation of general good or evil, and melt in mournful sympathy over “greatness fallen from its high estate.” But, when we consider the importance which this event may have in its consequences, not only to this country, but to all Europe, we lose sight of the individual sufferer, to meditate upon the destiny of mankind.

While you observe from a distance the great drama which is acting in France, I am a spectator of the representation—. I am placed near enough the scene to discern every look and every gesture of the actors, and every passion excited in the minds of the audience. I shall therefore endeavour to fill up the outline of that picture which France has presented to your contemplation since the memorable epocha of the tenth of August.

That conflict, which after the King’s acceptance of the new constitution existed in this country between the executive and legislative powers, between the court and the people, has since the tenth of August been succeeded by a conflict far more terrible: a conflict between freedom and anarchy, knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice. While the real patriots of France, in their different conflicts with the ancient despotism, risked their lives, and shed their blood, and by their desperate valour confirmed the liberty of their country, a set of men, who exposed not their persons to the smallest danger in the enterprize, contrived, without peril or exertion, to seize upon a considerable portion of power; and never surely in the annals of tyranny have we heard of power more shamefully abused. Those demagogues, known by the appellation of the

the "Commune provisoire de Paris," have, during the short period of their usurpation, committed more crimes than despotism itself would have achieved in ages. The crimes of tyrants, by exciting abhorrence, serve to promote the cause of freedom. It was reserved for the Commune of Paris to check the generous glow of sympathy with a great and magnanimous nation, which had nobly emancipated itself from slavery, and to lead all the feelings of humanity to take part with its oppressors. Surrounding nations, who might perhaps have been animated by the example of a country which has long served as a model to the rest of Europe, have heard of the second of September, and have shrunk back into the torpor of slavery. They have beheld, in the room of the pure and sublime worship of liberty, the grim idol of anarchy set up, and have seen her altar smeared with sanguinary rites. They have beheld the inhuman judges of that night wearing the municipal scarf which their polluting touch profaned, surrounded by men armed with pikes and sabres dropping with blood——while a number of blazing torches threw their glaring light on the ferocious visages of those execrable judges, who, mixing their voices with the shrieks of the dying, passed sentence with a savage mockery of justice, on victims devoted to their rage. They have beheld the infernal executioners of that night, with their arms bared for the purposes of murder, dragging forth those victims to modes of death at which nature shudders.—Ah! ye slaughtered heroes of the immortal 14th of July, was it for this ye overthrew the towers of the Bastille, and burst open the its gloomy dungeons?—was it for this, ye generous patriots, that with heroic contempt of life, ye shed your blood to give liberty

and happiness to your enslaved country?—Ah! had ye foreseen that the fanatics of liberty, fierce as the fanatics of superstition, would have their day of St. Bartholomew, would not your victorious arms have been unnerved? Would not the sacred glow of freedom have been frozen in your veins? Ah! what is become of the delightful visions, which elevated the enthusiastic heart?—What is become of the transport which beat high in every bosom, when an assembled million of the human race vowed on the altar of their country, in the name of the represented nation, inviolable fraternity and union—and eternal federation! This was indeed the golden age of the revolution.—But it is past!—the enchanting spell is broken, and the fair scenes of beauty and of order, through which imagination wandered, are transformed into the desolation of the wilderness, and clouded by the darkness, of the tempest. If the genius of Liberty—profaned Liberty! does not arise in his might, and crush those violators of freedom, whose crimes have almost broken the heart of humanity, the inhabitants of Paris may indeed “wish for the wings of the dove, that they may fly away and be at rest—for there is violence and strife in the city.”

At the head of this band of conspirators is Robertspierre—gloomy and saturnine in his disposition, with a countenance of such dark aspect as seems the index of no ordinary guilt—fanatical and exaggerated in his avowed principles of liberty, possessing that species of eloquence which gives him power over the passions, and that cool determined temper which regulates the most ferocious designs with the most calm and temperate prudence. His crimes do not appear to be the result of passion, but of some deep and extraordinary malignity, and he seems
formed

formed to subvert and to destroy. "One, next to him in power, and next in crime," is Danton, who, though not inferior to his associate in vice, and superior in ability, having less self-command, is consequently less dangerous.—This man, at the period of the massacres, was Minister of Justice, and, being conjured to exert his authority in putting a stop to those horrors, coolly answered, "*Quand le peuple ont exercé leur droits, je reprendrai les miennes.*"*

Marat, though sometimes spoken of as one of the leaders of this faction, is in reality only one of its instruments——

A fellow, by the hand of nature mark'd,
Quoted, and sign'd to do a deed of shame;
And taking note of his abhorred aspect,
Finding him fit for bloody villany,

he is employed to execute the purposes of more able heads.

This triumvirate, resembling the celebrated triumvirate of Rome in every thing that bears the marks of baseness and of crimes, had associated in their guilt a number of lesser chiefs, who in their turn had enlisted others as instruments of the same horrid purpose. The organization of this executive assembly was formed with so much address, that the less confidential members of it were ignorant how they came together, whilst those who were the primary movers were careful to leave no positive traces of their guilt. Hence arises the extreme difficulty of punishing these murderers; for though the complicated chain of evidence may be pursued to

* When the people have exerted *their* rights, I will resume *mine*.

to a certain length, yet it always breaks off in the link that leads to conviction. These chiefs had contributed to the annihilation of the power of the legislative assembly by their audacity, as much as itself had done by its want of energy and courage; and taking advantage of its weakness and little consideration with the people, they had carried their views, as it is generally believed, to the immediate overthrow of what remained of the then existing system, and meant to establish a government of municipalities, Mr. Burke's forty-four thousand republics, of which Paris should be the center, and they the worthy protectors. The idea was great, but the achievement was difficult. Who believes, that knows any thing of the character of these men, or who has observed with any attention their conduct since, that any thing but such inordinate ambition was their aim? But was it likely, you will ask, that the extirpation of priests, of the imprisoned agents of the aristocracy, and proscribed conspirators, could lead to the furtherance of their views? How, by making themselves the executors of such summary justice, could they arrive at the accomplishment of their wishes? Those victims alone would certainly have proved insufficient to the accomplishment of their designs, and there is no doubt that the proscription extended to the most distinguished members of the Assembly, and to the most virtuous and respectable men of the executive council. But these statesmen of the Commune felt that to strike at once those men, whom the people had been accustomed to consider as their firmest friends, would be too daring and desperate an act. A general insurrection of the mob, therefore, seemed to them the best mode of eventually accomplishing their purpose. And as no
mob

mob sufficiently great was to be procured by their own means, they contrived to make the Assembly itself ignorantly acquiesce in their diabolical projects. On the day, therefore, when these massacres began, the Commune appeared at the bar, and informed the Assembly, that at two o'clock they should order the alarms guns to fire, and the tocsin to sound, that the people summoned into the Champ de Mars might from thence march directly to meet the approaching enemy, who were coming with hasty steps to Paris, after having cut off the four thousand men sent to the relief of Verdun.—This was a falsehood, contrived and calculated, as they hoped, to accomplish their purpose: but though the people were much agitated, they were not sufficiently wound up for such an enterprize. Instead therefore of meeting in immense crowds in the Champ de Mars, where these assassins would have more readily found the means of urging them to any crime, they met peaceably in their different sections to consult on the best measures for the public safety, totally ignorant at the moment what horrid deeds were about to be transacted. Finding, therefore, that the people were not to be made the instruments, they were forced to make use of the means which they had previously concerted. The priests confined in the Carmes, under pretence of waiting some opportunity for banishment, according to a decree of the Assembly, fell the first victims.—The prisoners in the Abbaye were the next, who had been sent thither since the 10th of August by warrants from their murderers: the other prisons were visited successively, where this work of death, for the executioners were very few, lasted two days, and at the prison of La Force extended to four. One is tempted to enquire with,
Lear

Lear, "Is there any cause in nature that makes "these hard hearts?" Various conjectures have been formed respecting the number put to death in those four days—they have been lessened or exaggerated according to the political opinions of the relater. Lists of all the prisoners, at that time confined; are now printed by authority; and the amount is stated at one thousand and eighty-eight, including the felons, who formed nearly half the number. " * Mais, a-ton dit," said Louvet, in his accusation of Robespierre, "si le peuple n'a pas participé à ces meurtres, pourquoi ne les a-t-il pas empêchés? Pourquoi? parce que l'autorité tutélaire de Petion étoit enchainée; parce que Roland parloit en vain; parce que le ministre de la justice ne parloit pas; parce que les présidents des quarante-huit sections, prêtes à réprimer tant d'affreux désordres, attendoient des réquisitions que le commandant-général ne fit pas; parce que des officiers municipaux, couverts de leurs écharpes présidoient à ces atroces exécutions."

Twice Petion wrote to Santerre, the commander in chief of the national guard of Paris, conjuring him to send a sufficient guard to the prisons, to protect the prisoners from violence; but Santerre was called upon in vain. Twice Petion went himself to the prison de la Force, and after describing, in his speech upon Robespierre's accusation, the

* But it has been said, if the people did not participate in these murders, why did they not prevent them? Why? Because the tutelar authority of Petion was fettered; because Roland spoke in vain; because the minister of justice remained silent; because the presidents of the forty-eight sections, who were ready to suppress these horrible outrages, waited for orders, which the commander in chief never issued; because municipal officers, wearing the national scarf, the ensign of their judicial authority, presided at these atrocious executions.

the spectacle which there presented itself, with all the sensibility of indignant virtue, he adds, “ * Et les hommes qui jugeaient, et les hommes qui exécutaient, avaient la même sécurité, que si la loi les eût appelés à remplir ces fonctions. Ils me vantaient leur justice, leur attention à distinguer les innocents des coupables, les services qu’ils avaient rendus ; ils demandaient, pourrait-on le croire ? ils demandaient à être paryés du temps qu’ils avaient passé ; j’étais réellement confondu de les entendre.

“ Je leur parlai le langage austère de la loi : je leur parlai avec le sentiment de l’indignation profonde dont j’étais pénétré. Je les fis sortir tous devant moi ; j’étais à peine sorti moi-même ; qu’ils y rentrèrent : je fus de nouveau sur les lieux, pour les en chasser ; la nuit, ils achevèrent leur horrible boucherie.”

Such were the immediate evils of the second of September : their consequences will probably extend far beyond the limits of that country which was the theatre of this inhuman violence. The inhabitants of Paris must bear, through every succeeding age, the recorded disgrace of having remained in a state of stupified astonishment and terror, while no more than fifty hired assassins im-

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* And the men who passed judgment, and the men who executed that judgment, performed their office with as much security as if the law had called upon them to fulfil those functions. They boasted to me of their justice, their attention to distinguish the innocent from the guilty, and their important services. They demanded, can it be believed ! they demanded payment for their time. I was filled with horror at the request. I spoke to them the austere language of the law—I spoke to them with that feeling of deep indignation with which I was penetrated. I obliged them to depart. Scarcely was I gone myself, when they returned. I went a second time, and again forced them to leave the place ; but that night they finished their horrible butchery.

printed an indelible stain upon the country. But the bitter punishment of having incurred that disgrace, is, perhaps, all which this country has to fear. Anarchy cannot be lasting. The evils it may produce will be but the evils of this day and of to-morrow.—Those disorders which may for awhile convulse the infant republic, will cease with the lives of their perpetrators, who can assassinate individuals, but cannot assassinate opinions, which appear to be widely diffused. Yet these are considerations which may lead us to fear, that, if the evils of anarchy will be temporary, they will be also terrible. It is well known that all the legislative assembly did, was to undo what the constituent assembly had done. Convinced, from the conduct of the court, that the liberty of France could only be preserved by the terrible means of another revolution, the second legislature, not deeming the national guard sufficient for this purpose, armed every man in Paris, and consequently placed a formidable power in the hands of that swarm of idle and profligate persons which infests great capitals, and who, having nothing to lose, feel that “havock, and spoil and ruin are their gain.” Such persons are, under an established government, checked in their outrages on society, by the terror of punishment; but in the crisis of a revolution they become the dangerous instruments of party rage and faction. They may still commit enormities, of which the bourgeois of Paris, who appear since the second of September to be sunk in a state of complete stupefaction, may remain pusillanimous witnesses; but which may provoke the indignation of the other departments of the kingdom, where, in general, the love of liberty is connected with the utmost horror of anarchy. Hence civil commo-

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tions may arise. Upon the whole, the French revolution is still in its progress, and who can decide how its last page will finish?

The surrounding nations of Europe, after contemplating the savage spectacle which the second of September presented, will perhaps feel that despotism, armed with its arbitrary impositions, its gloomy towers, and its solitary dungeons, is not more hideous than anarchy. Despotism may be compared to a stream, which, supplied from a casual spring, or unequal source, leaves, for the most part, the region through which it passes parched and desolate; yet sometimes shedding partial moisture, cheers the eye with a spot of scanty verdure—but anarchy is the impetuous torrent that sweeps over the land with irresistible violence, and involves every object in one wide mass of ruin.

On the 20th of September the national convention assembled at Paris. On that assembly every eye was fixed with eager expectation. Invested with unlimited powers, its august mission was to give a new impulse to human affairs, to introduce a better order of things.—The fate not only of France, but of Europe, of mankind seemed entrusted to its wisdom and its virtue; and the happiness or misery of ages appeared to be suspended on its decisions. It was fondly hoped that its edicts would dispel the moral chaos of popular passions, and give birth to intellectual harmony and order.

“ Here be it thine to calm and guide

“ The swelling democratic tide,

“ To watch the state's uncertain frame,

“ And baffle faction's partial aim.”

But it was soon found that one circumstance, of inauspicious omen, had cast a cloud over the rising sun

fun of the republic. It was soon found that liberty had "fallen on evil days and evil tongues." Many of the electors of Paris were the adherents of that faction which had planned the massacres of September; and the sanctuary of the nation was profaned by the presence of men, who, after having violated all laws, appeared in the character of legislators. It was soon found that the cause of liberty had not only to fear the ambitious designs of the chiefs of this faction, who desired to rise upon the ruins of their country, and the profligate wretches who were the instruments of their crimes; but also the mistaken attachment of men who were seduced into this party, not from depravity of heart, but from principles carried to excess; men who, taken from the lowest stations of life, and having no knowledge of public affairs, are, from the ardour of their zeal for liberty, made the dupes of its pretended champions. If the party Gironde * desire to relieve the wants of the poorer class of citizens, the Mountain faction declare, that such expedients are at an abject distance from le hauteur de la revolution, which calls for an equal division of property.

"What happier natures shrink at with affright,

"The harden'd Maratist contends is right."

This faction endeavour to lead the people to the last degree of moral degradation, by teaching that the

* The party of *Gironde* is so called, because the department of the *Gironde* has proved more fertile than any other in talents; and most of the distinguished members of each national assembly have belonged to the *Gironde*, but not all; for *La Source* is not of that department. The faction at the head of which are Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, has taken the name of *La Montagne*, because its leaders usually place themselves on the most elevated seats in the assembly; and have also heard that the inhabitants of mountains are ardent lovers of liberty.

the love of order is the love of despotism, and that the most unequivocal proof of patriotism is to remain in permanent insurrection. In the sections of Paris, which for the most part are under the influence of this faction, a man, in order to gain applause, must harangue in the grossest language of the lowest vulgar; and a person of education is hooted for that reason only; any superiority of mind being considered as an aristocratical deviation from the great principles of equality. This faction have declared war against every improvement, and every grace of civilised society—all that embellishes human life—all that softens and refines our nature.—They desire to send the arts and sciences into everlasting exile, to throw down all the monuments of taste and genius, and to destroy all literature in one impious conflagration. What gives room to suspect that a considerable number of these demagogues have been purchased by foreign courts, is, that the faction of the Mountain has been joined by all the former nobles and priests, who have been chosen members of the national convention. This coalition seems to arise from similarity of views: from the hope that the people, tired at length of the mischiefs and the miseries of anarchy, will again bend their necks to the yoke of despotism. It is asserted by many persons, that Marat is a determined aristocrate. And it is certain that, when he preaches insurrection and massacre, he befriends the cause of tyrannic power; and if he is not the agent of the house of Austria, he is one of its most formidable allies. I lately asked a Frenchman of my acquaintance, who possesses distinguished talents, and the most ardent love of liberty, what prevented him from taking an active part in public affairs? Disgust," he replied, "Our revolution," added

added he, "reminds me of the works of a celebrated Italian painter, who drew the most charming scenery, enriched with the most beautiful prospects and delicious walks—but the groups of figures which were seen in those delightful regions, were grotesque and hideous.—Such," said he, "appears our revolution in my eyes. The theory is beautiful, the principles are sublime, but many of the actors are detestable; and it is a system of which the present race is not worthy." This want of virtue is, in truth, the sentence of their condemnation. They have indeed thrown off the fetters, but they have retained the vices of despotism.

"And when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
 "Contracting regal power to stretch their own;
 "When I behold a factious band agree,
 "To call it freedom when themselves are free;
 "Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
 "Tear off reserve, and rend my swelling heart;
 "Till, half a patriot, half a coward grown,
 "I fly from petty tyrants to the throne."

After several weeks passed in tumultuous opposition, on the part of the Mountain, to every measure proposed by the party Gironde, and in violent denunciations against Roland, that minister, who, after having opposed with noble firmness the tyranny of the court, now resisted with the same inflexible virtue the tyranny of the demagogues, and whom the Abbé Sieyès emphatically calls "*Le Veto des coquins* *," the faction of the Mountain, in conjunction with the Jacobins and the sections of Paris, demanded with clamorous vehemence the trial of the dethroned monarch, or rather his execution, since the tedious forms of a trial did not accord with the summary proceedings of the judges of

* "*The Veto of villains.*"

of the second of September, who were accustomed to murder † sans instruction préalable. But before I give you an account of the trial, it is in the order of time to mention the victories obtained by the French arms in that memorable campaign, the brilliant successes of which it will require all the authenticity of modern history to render credible to posterity. The splendid triumphs of the "plumed war," says our great poet, "make even ambition virtue." But here they are pure and un sullied in the view of morality; for we feel that the only just cause for war, that scourge of the human race, is when men take up arms to defend their country from invasion, to protect their property, their wives, their children. Of that eventful campaign I have it in my power to send you a most interesting detail, which I received in a series of letters from one of my English friends, who had spirit enough, in defiance of personal hardships and danger, to visit the armies, and who, having had the best opportunities of observation, has not only traced with accuracy, as well as energy, the great leading events of the campaign, but has also related many little incidents, which, as they serve to mark the temper of the contending parties, are highly valuable. We wish to snatch from oblivion the most minute circumstances, connected with any remarkable epocha in human affairs: we wish to view the scene which has been the theatre of any memorable action. The letters I now inclose will convey to your mind, in a high degree, that sort of gratification; from which I will not detain you longer.

† Without previous notice.

LETTER II.

St. Menehould, October 6.
First Year of the Republic.

— WE arrived here last evening, under circumstances very distressing to any but those who had made up their account for hardships and adventure; for we found assembled the état-major of three or four armies, with the commissaries of the convention, who, with their numerous attendants, had so filled the town, that it seemed doubtful whether we could find room, even in the streets, blocked up as they were with baggage-waggons, caissons, cannon, and other implements of war, for our carriage, if we were once more compelled to make it our sleeping apartment. After parting from Chalons, we entered that part of Champaign which is proverbial for its barrenness and poverty; and, as if nature had not done sufficiently little for it, the Prussians and Austrians had been industrious to reduce it to its minimum. Here we found the first vestiges of the desolation of war, in dead horses, plundered cottages, and the destruction of every thing that had the appearance of wood, however unfitted for fuel; such as instruments of husbandry, the gable end of houses, or the trees which ornament the public roads in France, and which, in this uninteresting country, must have been peculiarly grateful to the otherwise wearied eye of the traveller. It was with extreme difficulty that we

had made three posts in the course of seven hours, the intercourse between the armies and Paris having been lately so great, that the poor animals, which in more tranquil days are not much encumbered with flesh, could scarcely here be acknowledged for horses. The night was drawing on, when, after passing over the Prussian entrenchments, on the heights marked by geographers as the camp of Attila, we reached the village of Orbwal, which is two leagues from this place, and near which the action of the 20th of September took place. The inhabitants were not yet recovered from their terrors. The shades of Austrians and Prussians were dancing before their eyes, and the music of cannon sounding yet in their ears; so that we were often obliged to repeat our question, and accommodate our voice to the tone of their tympanum; and every answer they gave us was accompanied by a vociferation, in which the report of the artillery was very well imitated. On reaching this village, which, after the dreary wilderness we had passed, our appetites and imagination had figured as the land of Canaan, we found nothing of its characteristics; for the same desolation had followed the march of the enemy, and the armies then around them had finished in emptying the country of all its resources. An American officer of artillery, whom we had seen at Chalons, and whose baggage we had taken into our carriage to relieve his horse, otherwise sufficiently loaded, had arrived here before us, and having succeeded in procuring some refreshment for his wearied animal, was supplicating the circle of half-starved spectators, to procure the same favour for himself. We found him in the attitude of Panurge in Rabelais, making all the signs which his ingenuity could invent (for though appointed to the
command

command of a battalion, he understood not a syllable of the language), to inform them that he was expiring for hunger; whilst they, who perfectly well understood his meaning, could not make it so clear to his apprehensions that there were some places in the world where nothing could be gained even for money. The curse of famine could not have presented a more desolating appearance. As we could procure no food, we were not tortured by the sight of any of the implements for its preparation; for the cooks of the enemy had despoiled them of every kitchen utensil. A soldier at length entered, with whom we exchanged a seat at our fire, and a livre or two for a morsel of his bread, to appease the hunger of our half English brother; and after this repast, with horses of equal worth and celerity with the last, we reached St. Menehould. Every thing here that had the appearance of an inn had long been pre-occupied; and we were about to give up the search in despair, when our forlorn situation moved the pity of a lady, the owner of an hotel, which had the appearance of being occasionally the receptacle of the humbler sort of travellers; where having gained a footing, she undertook to procure us something that might bear the resemblance of a bed. The kitchen presented us with sufficient charms to fix our attention. A host of officers were seated round the table, calling with some impatience for the service, of whose common dish we were invited to partake, and which we should have readily accepted, had not every seat been already occupied. We therefore prepared our repast like classic heroes, and made trenchers of our bread. A blazing fire dried our garments, which had been drenched whilst we were seeking this asylum; and a bottle of better wine was procured

cured for us, than the pay of our companions could afford, who did us the favour to partake it with us. Pleasures are comparative. While *we* thought on the splendour and hospitality of Merville, in whose enchanting gardens we passed the last week, *they* congratulated themselves in being sheltered from the pitiless storm, that was howling around their companions encamped on the adjoining hills; though to have fared so well, when we had every expectation of faring so badly, ought to have been to us a subject of congratulation also. We made part of their circle, and partook of the general amusement; which was that of relating, every man to his neighbour, who without paying attention was equally occupying the ear of the next, the adventures of the day, and, what had fifty times been related and known before, the adventures of the whole campaign. The necessity they felt to give us information, when they found us complaisant enough to listen, kept us till a late hour; and judging of what was to come by what was present and past, had it not been for disturbing the œconomy of the family, I should have preferred my immediate post, and waited for the morning without hazarding the contingent comforts of a bed. This accommodation our hostess, after much labour and contrivance, had found, or rather made for us in a chamber which in days of splendour, such as fairs and great markets, was occupied by the servants of pedlers, and merchants of that description; but which ordinarily was the repository of wood for the family. After wading ankle deep, and ascending a ladder at the end of a stable-yard, we found two mattresses decently laid on straw; one of which was occupied by an officer, who, from his attitude
on

on our entrance, was probably dreaming of thieves or the enemy. The sheets, an unexpected luxury, of the other mattress, being in a state of vapour, independently of other considerations, I wrapped my great coat round me, and made up for the fatigue of the past days, by sleeping till morning very profoundly.

I waited on the commissaries Carra and de Sil-lery, who had been sent, with Prieur, by the convention, as civil superintendents of the armies. I heard from them that Dumourier had left St. Menhould early this morning, with the intention of marching his army towards Flanders; leaving Kellerman and Dillon to attend the Prussians, who are now in full retreat. From them also we have learnt the principal events of this hitherto extraordinary campaign; and as the weather continues so unfriendly to any farther expedition at present, I shall reserve my visit to Dumourier's camp till the morrow, and finish my letter with a slight sketch of what has hitherto been effected, in as unmilitary a style as possible.

The campaign opened under very unhappy auspices. You remember the distress and indignation which reigned throughout Paris when the news of the disastrous retreat from Tournay and Mons arrived, and the horrid circumstances with which it was attended. The retreat was disregarded, but the murder of Dillon and the prisoners was a stain which nothing could efface. Its unhappy effects were not confined to Paris; it was a blow given to the cause of Liberty in every country. Mr. Burke was glorying in the accomplishment of his prophecies in the House of Commons, whilst Mr. Fox observed, more prophetically, that, when they both lamented the defeats of Washington, and shed tears
over

over the fate of Montgomery, a short time reversed the scene, in victories obtained, and armies captured; and that, though he had equal abhorrence with himself at the deed which he reprobated, yet he had known too much of the world to feel despondent at such events, and had learnt, from the example of America, not to be disconcerted at the failure of first enterprizes; reminding him that Franklin, to whom, when news was brought whilst negotiating at Paris, that the American armies were totally routed, coolly replied, I expected it*. Here, though the feelings of the court, on the success of this fatal enterprize (for to the court it was a victory) were in perfect unison with Mr. Burke, yet it did not dare avow its satisfaction so openly; but the Austrian committees were subjects of eterna denunciation, and their correspondence with the enemy was as well known at Paris, as it was in the chamber where these committees sat. The court, forgetting that any change had taken place in the opinions of the people; surrounded by characters which soothed its vanity and flattered its hopes, thought that, by filling every office of any influence with its own dependents, so long as it kept within the exact letter of the constitution, the people would not dare to examine into its conduct, or, if they durst, that the law would have force to awe them into silence. With this persuasion the court, making the extreme use of the power given it by the constitution, the means whereby it could more effectually put into execution its treasonable purposes,

* Franklin was not much in the habit of speaking the French language, but had a few significant phrases to express his feelings. When the news of any unfortunate event was brought him, he used to exclaim, "Oui oui, c'est possible; mais ca ira, ca ira;" which was the origin of this popular song.

purposes, had procured, through the electoral assemblies, on the dissolution of the first legislature, those persons who were most devoted to its interests to be chosen into the directories of the departments, and had filled, as far as it could without suspicion, the army with those officers, of whose attachment it had the most perfect assurance. To give greater facility to these operations, it had blinded the public with the dismissal of one set of ministers, and the choice of others, till some appearances of its wishes to comply with those of the people was manifested in the nomination of the patriotic ministers, Dumourier and Roland. Roland had the sagacity soon to perceive "that there was behind the throne a greater power than the throne itself;" but Dumourier was for some time longer the dupe. Roland's dismissal was accompanied by a letter addressed to the king, which was a model of firmness and state integrity; and Dumourier was soon after compelled to resign. Going from the bar of the assembly, he observed to a friend, that he had little farther to do than to "*faire son petit paquet pour aller à Orleans*;" but Providence has reserved him for a better fate; and his subsequent conduct has shewn, that in this instance he was more weak than guilty.

Little victories and retreats, slight skirmishes, and the transferring of camps from one place to another, dragged on the campaign, till another expedition, with more success, was undertaken against Flanders; and a town or two of no great importance fell into the hands of the French. Their retreat from this acquisition, whilst the hopes of the people were rising, was another cause of discontent, of which the court were little observant, since it had hitherto succeeded so well in every plan it had under-

undertaken towards the accomplishment of its great project. The requisition for the banishment of the refractory clergy, and the formation of a camp near Paris, had been set aside by the veto of the constitution; and though the tumult on the 20th of June had given some alarm, yet it was hoped that no such accidents would happen in future. Paris at length became more violently agitated than ever; and the royalists, secure of success, discovered every day more and more of their intentions. The department, ignorant of the extent of this conspiracy of the court (for La Rochefoucault could not be a traitor), supported by La Fayette and a part of the legislative assembly, by dismissing Petion, raised the popular indignation and fury to the most alarming height. Though the court sanctioned this dismissal, the assembly solemnly reinstated him. The address of La Fayette, to the Legislature, against the Jacobins, still increased this democratic rage. The sections of Paris, at the bar of the assembly, demanded the dethronement of the king. The matter had gone too far for any possibility of reconciliation. The court and people were for some days in hostile preparations against each other: the 10th of August arrived, and France was for the time saved.

This little detail was necessary, to explain why, when an army of Prussians, Austrians, Hessians, and Emigrés, to the amount of 100,000 men, were entering the French territories, La Fayette in his camp at Sedan had only 18,000 men to oppose them. Dumourier and Dillon were dividing their little force between Maubeuge and Maulde; Cus-
tine was shut up at Landau; Kellerman at Wissembourg; the enemy appeared every where: and
whilst

whilst the Hessians and Emigrants were to pass the Rhine, the Austrians to penetrate into the department of the north, the people of Piedmont to invade the south, and the aristocracy to take off the mask in all the interior parts; the Duke of Brunswick, with great tranquillity, and unopposed, would march directly to Paris. The events of the 10th of August disconcerted this well-arranged system. La Fayette had taken his flight, finding his army incorruptible, but its deplorable situation left little hopes of making any effectual stand against so formidable an host. Already had the Duke of Brunswick entered France. Clairfait was arrived from the Low Countries, and had planted himself on the right of the Prussian army. A second column of Austrians commanded by Hohenloe, one of Emigrants, and another of Hessians, were in the rear of the Prussians. Already had Longwi surrendered, and the enemy were preparing to lay siege to Verdun or Montmedy, whilst Luckner had not more than 15,000 men that he could dispose of without leaving every other place of importance under his direction altogether unprotected. In this perilous situation was the French army on the 30th of August, when the council of war, which Dumourier assembled, acknowledging the impossibility of attacking the enemy in front, agreed on making as powerful a diversion as possible in the Low Countries. But as the execution was too hazardous to be undertaken before it met with the approbation of the executive council, Dumourier made the best possible dispositions to throw obstacles in the way of the enemy, to harass them; and though he could form no expectation of arresting their march, he might cause its delay, and give time for the executive council to determine what conduct in these extreme

extreme circumstances he ought to pursue. So well arranged had this conspiracy been, that nothing was agitated at this moment, but the question of the arrival of the Prussians at Paris. Those who asserted the affirmative were the royalists who wished, and the cowards who feared it. They founded their opinions on the great reputation of the Duke Brunswick, whose head was cool and calculating. It was alledged by them, that he had settled his plan, and was conducting troops well disciplined, whilst the French had only raw recruits, inferior in numbers and in system; that he had agents in every quarter to give him information; that the emigrants who were with him would form a centre, around which all the disaffected would arrange themselves; that one or two places being taken, nothing could stop the progress of so immense a force, which would disarm in its march the patriots, arm the disaffected, pillage and destroy the country, seize on every favourable post, hinder the provisioning of Paris, and thus save the trouble of a massacre, by previously starving its inhabitants. All this had much the appearance of probability. Alarm and terror sat on many a countenance, but on none more than on some of our countrymen, of whom some wanted to drink the waters of Switzerland, and others the waters of other places; yet no release from Paris could on any terms be obtained, and they were compelled to await the restoration of their health, under circumstances that added every hour to their newly acquired disease. This indisposition, however, had seized only a few; for those in whom previous real derangement of nerves might have formed some excuse for terror, bore the appearance of the approaching danger with philosophic fortitude. The women and children at this

time were working at the redoubts and fortifications forming round Paris.

The difficulty of his situation gave new energies to the mind of Dumourier. He was at this moment to attempt the impossible. He had at first ventured to dispute the passage of the Meuse, but this he found was impracticable, as it was fordable in fifty places: the Prussians had now invested Verdun, and the Austrians had taken possession of Stenay. General Galbaud was sent to Verdun with two battalions; but it was too late; it had surrendered; and as no one doubted but that it could hold out for some weeks, the consternation excited by its immediate surrender was dreadful. Those who had considered the operations of war, had imagined that this late campaign of the Prussians would have been nearly finished before they had scarcely entered France; for it was beyond all probability that Longwi would have surrendered in less than three weeks or a month, when the rainy season, and an unaccustomed climate, would have prevented their farther march.

Under these unexpected and cruel circumstances, Dumourier fell back with his little army to the pass of Grand Pré, and its position became every day more critical. Its whole number was scarcely composed of more than the single division commanded by General Clairfait, who might have attacked it every instant, and who leaves us yet to wonder at the French being left in the undisturbed possession of this excellent post.

No reinforcements had as yet arrived. On the right lay the whole Prussian army, in possession of Varennes and Clermont, ready to advance, whilst the Austrian general was on the left. Then it was that the genius of Dumourier unfolded itself:

itself: he determined at once on a plan, romantic at first view, but which brought on the Duke of Brunswick all his misfortunes, and proved the salvation of France. Though his army was so inconsiderable, he diminished it still farther, and sent Dillon with a detachment to take possession of the famous pass in the forest of Argonne, whilst he resolved to stand firm, and await the whole force of the enemy in that of Grand Pré. It was inconceivable that the Duke of Brunswick, in possession of Clermont, which is but two leagues from this formidable spot, should have neglected its seizure whilst there was no opposition, or at least none but that of two battalions; or that he should have suffered Dillon to pass unmolested, and in sight of his videttes, through parts of the forest that are almost impervious, and from an establishment which afterwards resisted for twenty-five days the attacks of five times his number. When it was too late he found his error; and after having surveyed the spot with the King of Prussia, from the opposite heights; after having attempted it by an attack, and, as it is reported, bestowed some heavy denunciations on his own neglect, he determined to make the tour of the forests by Varennes.

It was impossible to withstand this immense force with any hopes of success: the pass of Croix aux Bois had been forced, and no succour had yet arrived. To impose on the enemy, Dumourier made his whole army light up their fires, so as to appear the fires of an advanced guard only, whence it might well be imagined that his force was more formidable. At this time the two generals, Dumourier and Dillon, occupied a space of thirty miles, and they had the address to maintain their several posts, so as to give time for the arrival of

reinforcements. The pass of Grand Pré was, however, forced, and Dumourier was obliged to fall back towards St. Menchould. The Prussian army had advanced towards Chalons, and was encamped on the heights of La Lune. The French troops had, however, by this time arrived from Pont-sur-Sambre. Bournonville with 13,000 men, after raising the camp at Maulde, had joined them; and Kellerman, who had been marching from the south, where he had waited for the enemy, supposing that the Prussians would have taken that direction, on this day arrived also. What seems most extraordinary is, that the Duke of Brunswick should have delayed his attack till these junctions had taken place. The 20th of September ought ever to be held by France in grateful remembrance. The army of Kellerman was attacked by the Prussians with a cannonade, which lasted without intermission for fourteen hours. In vain did they shew their address in manœuvring; in vain was displayed their proverbial Prussian discipline. During the cannonade, three several times the Duke attempted to surround them, but Dumourier on the right presented himself continually to meet him. The Prussians hesitated, for they saw how obstinately bent the French army was on resistance, and heard, as they approached, the cries of the soldiers—*Vive la Nation!* This the is finest moment of our lives! This is the hour of vengeance!

This indeed the was important moment—all depended on the firmness of Kellerman's division. This division consisted of but 16,000, whilst the Prussians opposed to them amounted to three times the number, and it had encamped, on the ground they now occupied, only the preceding evening, after forced marches day and night, and in weather and through roads

roads the most detestable. Had they shrunk or been shaken, the business might here have ended: the superiority of Prussian tactics would have carried the day; and the armies brought to oppose their progress would have opposed it in vain. The event of this day was sufficient to convince the Duke of Brunswick, that he was mistaken with respect to the size and quality of the resistance he had to meet with; for after an attack which, for its length and fierceness, had scarcely a parallel, he beheld the French generals preparing for another, by forming positions in which he durst not any farther attempt them. The situation of the French army was, nevertheless, singular and perilous. At Clermont, on one side, the enemy had 20,000 men; Varennes was in their possession; at Grand Pré they had established their hospitals; and on the heights of La Lune, interrupting the road from Chalons, they had formed their camp, which was too strongly fortified to fear any attack, however formidable. These immense armies were on the eastern, western, and northern sides of the French, which consisted but of half their number; and the southern side was worth almost another ally to the Prussians, since, from the impracticability of the roads, it was of as little service to the French, as if it had been blocked up by an army. Thus surrounded, without any farther resources, or the appearance of receiving any, since the communication with Chalons was cut off by the camp on the road, one would have thought that all again was lost, and that the French army would have been starved into submission, compelled to fight to a ruinous disadvantage, or obliged to retreat at the only opening left them, with the loss of all their baggage and artillery, and part, at least, of their forces. Though

Though Dumourier, whose mind always kept pace with circumstances, had preserved the confidence, and had the faculty of inspiring his army with still greater : though Kellerman had taken positions which rendered an attack on him extremely hazardous ; though Dillon might have procured a retreat for his division, and food for his army ; though, through indefatigable labour, a road was at length effected, by which provisions could be supplied, as those who furnished them overcame almost insurmountable difficulties ; though the soldiers suffered, without murmuring, and, if devoted to destruction, would have made the effects of their despair felt by the surrounding tyrants ; yet, that the French were saved at this eventful moment, thanks to the genius of Liberty—eternal thanks to that kind Providence, which never ceases to watch over the best interests of mankind, for its interposition in their favour ; an interposition which, though following in the order of natural events, leaves no less impression on the reflecting mind of gratitude and praise.

The post now obliges me to finish. On my return from Dumourier's camp to morrow, I shall continue this little detail, which I have interrupted whilst I have been surveying, from the heights of the town, the army coming down from the adjoining hills. The country around is highly picturesque, and the present scene, with the sentiment that accompanied it, gave it a much more lively interest. This evening Kellerman's army took possession of the ground which the others had just quitted. There is something pleasant in viewing the good order introduced by the present rational discipline (the savage Prussian mode of breaking-in of soldiers having ceased here with the ancient despotism), and the cheerfulness with which, whilst the

the French pitched their tents, formed their kitchens, and prepared their food, the chorus of national songs was heard along the line in every direction. An afternoon of fair weather had succeeded torrents of rain, which have been pouring down for some days past; and the sun, so long a stranger, after drying their tents, and enlivening their spirits, seemed to have taken leave of the world in thorough good-humour. As the camp was arranged on the sides of corresponding hills, the view was singularly romantic. The distant and numerous fires, brought forcibly to my mind a similar scene in Homer. My reverie had nearly cost me my liberty; for, delighted with all around me, I was wandering on without noticing the retreat which had been sounded, when I was arrested; and, had I been any other than an Englishman, should not have been released without undergoing the formality of an examination at the head-quarters. As I seemed perfectly indifferent about this threatened process, and acquainted the officer with the immediate subject of my reverie, he undertook my release, on my solemn assurance, that I had no disposition to give any information to the enemy, nor any views hostile to the welfare of the republic.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Clermont, October 8.
First Year of the Republic.

WE had intended to visit Dumourier's camp this morning at Autry, a little village, about a league distant from St. Menehould, but we have changed our project, to a walk in the forest of Argonne; and tempted by the interest of the scene, and the fineness of the morning, we have rambled on four leagues to Clermont. Before our departure, I received the English journals, with the account which the ambassador at Brussels had transmitted to our court, of the unconditional surrender of Dumourier's army to the Prussians, who, it seems, had completely surrounded them, and were arrived within twelve leagues of Paris, with the precise and determinate intention of the Duke of Brunswick, to dine at the Tuilleries on the first of October.

I have already observed, that the ignorance of the Duke of Brunswick in not knowing, or his more faulty neglect in not seizing on this pass, was the cause of all his subsequent misfortunes. Finding, when it was too late, that this important post had been occupied by Dillon, after an indecision of a day and a half, he resolved, in order to regain his road to Paris, to make the circuit of the forest by Varennes and Grand-Pré, a route of nearly fifty miles, which he did not accomplish till the 20th of September; when in taking possession
of

of this post, which was for some days in his power, by a march of only four leagues, on an excellent road, he might have reached St. Menehould and his present position on the fourth. This delay not only gave time to Dumourier and the other generals to form their junction, which they had but a day or two before his arrival happily effected, but was the means also of involving himself and his army in inextricable difficulties. After he had described this semicircle, and during his march had been impeded by numerous obstacles, he found himself in a barren country, without wood or water, and in a season uncommonly inclement, both from rain and cold. From the length of his march, the difficulty of procuring provisions and other stores was considerably increased; and the rain, which had poured down in torrents since his departure, had so swoln the rivers which he had left behind, and destroyed the ways, that his army was without bread for nearly four days. The intemperance of the soldiers in eating fruits to which they had not been accustomed, laid the foundation of a fatal disease; and in a country where the only relief they could obtain from the inclemency of the weather, arose from the fires made with the scanty trees that grew on the highway side, it was not wonderful that their camp should be found one vast cemetery. It seemed as if Providence was disposed, by its own dispensations, to leave the French no foes to combat.

In this situation was the Duke of Brunswick, when he proposed a cessation of arms, and invited Dumourier to an amicable conference. He now saw, with all the force of conviction, the impracticability of proceeding one step farther towards Paris. Instead of divisions among the people, he

saw, except in the treasons or terrors of Longwi and Verdun, but one sentiment; that of adhesion to the legislative assembly, and abhorrence of his manifestoes and himself. Instead of marching unmolested to Paris, he found a little army of a few thousands, though disorganized by traitors, affrighted neither at the number, nor discipline, nor threats, nor barbarities of 100,000 satellites of despotism, but disputing with him every post, and making every where a formidable stand. Instead of seeing the regular troops crowding to his standard, as he was led to believe, he felt the full force of their courage in the opposite direction. Instead of being hailed with universal acclaim as the saviour of France, as he was flattered in the expectation, he beheld on every side curses and execrations; and heard, instead of preparations to receive him at Paris, only the solemn and thrice-sworn resolves of its brave defenders to bury him and themselves in one vast and common ruin. Thus circumstanced, he endeavoured to procure, by negociation, that which he had come to enforce by arms. All that passed in these interviews is not yet, and probably never will be, publicly known. This interval gave time to the Prussians to bury their numerous dead, and to prepare for their meditated retreat; but it gave time also to Dumourier to receive fresh supplies and reinforcements, and to procure instructions from the executive council respecting the conduct he should pursue under such new and unexpected circumstances. The usual civilities, which in these more civilized times the laws of war permit during the suspension of hostilities, took place here. Dumourier sent, as a present to the king of Prussia, twelve pounds of sugar, as much of coffee, and, what had more of sarcasm than benevolence,
twelve

twelve loaves of bread. The last were returned, with the assurance that great plenty reigned throughout the camp, and that the kindness of the intention only could be accepted. The Duke of Brunswick returned the civility in two bottles of tokay; and though it was agreed not to discuss political subjects, yet, as the company was informed that it was the king of Prussia's birth-day, Dumourier observed, that, though he could have wished to have found the king in better circumstances, yet, such as they were, he would drink his health. This complaisance on the part of the French general provoked Manstein, the king's confident, to propose a toast in his turn. I give you, said Manstein, anticipating, by the pleasantness of his countenance, the applause he should acquire by the extent of his liberality, "The People of France." Hold, cried Dumourier, we have now a name for our people; the health, if you will allow the amendment, of the republic of France. "You jest, surely," said Manstein: "Here are the dispatches just this moment arrived; look at the date and title." Manstein changed countenance; he silently put down the glass, and left the room. It was hinted in subsequent conferences, that if the general would join in the restitution of the king, nay, if any place quelconque could be procured for him, other matters should be accommodated to his entire satisfaction; but it was answered, that any future propositions of that sort would be regarded as insults, and that, finally, no terms could be discussed till the French territory was freed from its invaders.

During this parley the commissaries arrived from the Convention; the choice of them was judicious. Carra joins to a Roman appearance, a republican

publican soul. He has made acquirements in literature of various kinds; but has bent his mind chiefly towards the acquisition of that knowledge which he has thought best fitted for the promotion of the happiness of mankind. He speaks with tolerable fluency the English language, and has studied with great attention our best writers on the subject of government; such as Milton, Sydney, Harrington, and Locke. The instruction, or as Mr. Burke would call it, the corruption of the soldiery, has been his chief aim; for men are no longer slaves; but when they are ignorant. His letters to the army have been read with great avidity, and so far have they been from corrupting the soldiery, or spoiling them for their trade, that those who have been the best informed, are always remarked as being the most orderly and disciplined. Our common acquaintance, M. de Sillery, I need not describe to you—to an elegant taste for letters, and an ardour in the cause of liberty, to which he has made many sacrifices, he joins all that is pleasing in aristocratical manners. When these commissaries arrived with the decree of the Convention, declaring that monarchy was abolished in France, and that in future the government should be republican, it was judged right that the decree should be read to the whole army, who were to be drawn out to receive it. This was accordingly done; and the Prussians on the opposite hills were spectators of the whole arrangement. The Duke of Brunswick might have hoped that some compromise at least would take place; that the National Convention, taking into consideration the state of the country, with so immense an army of enemies in its bosom, would have proposed some terms honourable to themselves, and less disgraceful than uncon-

unconditional retreat to him. He might have hoped that the name of king, though unpopular amongst the enlightened of the people, had yet its hold in the prejudices of soldiers, taught at all times to view him as the sole object of military adoration.

Judge, then, of his astonishment at the deadly blow given to all his expectations, when he saw the whole army, as by an electric impulse, stretching out their hands in the accustomed form of taking the oath, and holding up their hats on their bayonets, while the hills resounded with shouts and acclamations, which he soon discovered to be the cries of *Vive la loi—Vive la nation—Vive la convention nationale—Vive la republique*. Whatever hopes he had before entertained, this last hint effectually dissipated. He gave orders for retreat, but first left a manifesto behind him, which, from its extreme silliness and impotent menace, could only be meant to make us forget the unskillfulness of the general in the folly of the negociator.

The retreat accordingly began by the pass of Grand Pré; but it was conducted but slowly, so oppressed were the Prussians with the dying and the dead. They are on their march to Verdun; on which place Kellerman and Dillon's armies conjointly are to make an attack. It is very probable, however, that this event will not take place, as it seems to be the intention of the Duke of Brunswick to hasten from the French territory as speedily as he can; as his retreat is made more uninterruptedly than policy could warrant, unless Dumourier, in passing into Flanders with his army, has made some secret treaty with the King of Prussia, which is not improbable; for he could not otherwise

otherwise have neglected this opportunity of carrying both him and his general prisoners to Paris.

Who can look back on the occurrences of the last month, without considering it, for some moments, as a dream, and exclaiming with the poet,

“ Visions of glory ! spare my aching sight.”

But a month since how many faces were clothed with terror, and hearts beating with apprehension. Those noble and sublime sacrifices which every day witnessed, were they not often made to despair as well as to patriotism ? How often did we hear repeated the dreadful proposition, of going before the enemy, and laying waste the country through which they had to pass ; and if these efforts should be unavailing to hinder their approach, how stern was the resolve, that Paris should be surrendered only when its ruins should become the common grave of its enemies and defenders ! Pressed by such a host of formidable enemies without, to what horrid lengths of despotism were they driven—to deeds which have no name, and which must no more be remembered.

Post after post now fell into the hands of the enemy, and the people were accustomed to see nothing but treason where trust had been reposed. Despair gave wings to their apprehensions, and their suspicions assured them, that, in every instance of retreat, or fruitless attack, the army was ever on the point of being captured, because the interest of the enemy and of their own generals was the same.

I need not give any colouring to the various scenes of terror, despondence, ferocity, courage, enthusiasm ; of all that is dreadful and sublime ; of all that can interest the feelings or strike the human heart,

heart, which we then beheld around us. Hope at this moment seemed to have fled: listlessness and indifference about the fate of France had banished from our minds that concern and anxiety which had hitherto so much interested and enlivened us. We beheld her sinking into unfathomable depths, and had laid up our account for a long train of evils—not to ourselves only, but to every friend of liberty throughout the world. But how has a little month reversed this gloomy scene! All then was lost to the French, except the consciousness of deserving a better destiny—all has now been gained, which the most extravagant in wishes can desire. Was not the south, in all our apprehensions, given up to the King of Sardinia?—behold them in possession of all his territory on this side the Alps. Were not the confederate chiefs of the German empire in the expectation and the act of overrunning and dismembering the richest provinces?—See state after state, bishopricks, electorates, and principalities—seats of priests and princes falling into their hands. Was not the imperious house of Austria in more than imagination adding to her fertile and rich domains, on this side of the Rhine, the long line of coast on the northern part of France? Behold them chasing its hordes from the land, and about to give freedom to those domains, by joining them in alliance with their own. Were not the Prussians to have been at this moment in Paris, bringing back to its former splendour the court, with all its ancient pomp and revelry? See them seeking their safety in disgraceful flight, and grateful for their escape from half their number of foes; whilst the unhappy monarch, whose tyranny they were to restore, is transferred from his court to a prison. What ranges of gibbets were “to have

have blackened all the way" with Jacobins, and patriots of every description—the just objects of royal vengeance, for crimes which it never could have pardoned? See assembled those patriots, re-clothed with power by the people, declaring the kingdom a republic, about to establish a still more popular constitution, and ordering the immediate trial of him whom they were to have felt as a tyrant, but who is now sunk into contempt with them as a traitor.

Though the interesting scenes that were passing before our eyes at Paris had occasionally lessened our apprehensions; though the resources that were continually presenting themselves had at some moments abated our fears; though we beheld multitudes pouring up from the provinces, and the roads on each side the capital covered with artillery and soldiers of various descriptions; though in every quarter of the city we beheld all the ties of social and domestic life broken; wives parting with their husbands, young women exhorting their lovers, and mothers partaking of the ardour of their sons; though such an enthusiasm was excited as had never before been felt, and France, as the events have proved, was never so formidable; yet the occurrence of such events had never entered our imaginations. Here, then, in its full energy, was displayed that moral force which supercedes physical courage, and dissipates all calculation. Such was the force which led the handful of Athenians, but half known to liberty, to drive back the armies and fleets of invading tyrants; such that caused the mountaineers of Switzerland, and the traffickers of the Low Countries, after ages of bloody persecution and intolerable chains, to triumph over their respective oppressors; and such as gave us a lesson in America,

rica, which we ought long to remember, if it be possible for nations to profit by any example.

It is not generally known the extent of the obligation which France owes to her generals, or the important service which the possession of this fortunate Thermopylæ has rendered to the republic. Pressed on almost every side, an ordinary commander would have buried himself for security in the depths of those forests; but the ardent mind of Dumourier conceived at once the project, which the danger of the attempt did not hinder him from executing. I have called it romantic: it certainly was daring; it was beyond all expectation that the Prussians should not have seized on this passage; and the march thither was attended with difficulties and dangers, the hazard of which, on any other occasion, with even a much greater probability of success, would scarcely have been justifiable. This pass, so memorable in future history, is in the midst of the forest, which ranges over a space of almost 45 or 50 miles. After passing through the orchards, gardens, and vineyards, which surround St. Menchould, we entered the woods, and came to this formidable spot. A deep valley, with hills rising rapidly on each side, runs through the whole length, with defiles at intervals, capable of being easily guarded. In order to cross this valley, an enemy must force those passes, penetrate woods, and climb mountains nearly perpendicular, covered alternately with rocks and brushwood; or, as the Prussian army did, make the tour of the forests, lengthening the march of its provisions and stores, and rendering itself liable, in such an unknown and unexplored country, to be cut off by scouts and detachments falling from the woods, against which it would be impossible to make any defence.

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On the most important part of these defiles, which is the great road leading from Clermont to Paris, Dillon had formed his camp; and on the mountains near and around it had constructed his works. These precipices overlook the country stretching away to Clermont, whose mountain, called the Vache, terminates the view in front, whilst on each side, save where a few cottages, and meadow grounds cleared from the wood, diversify the scene, nothing presents itself but forests rising over each other in singular and picturesque directions. After reposing ourselves, and feeling something more in the prospect than Gilpin would describe, we came down the mountain to a river which runs along the valley, and which also had been made to contribute its part to the general defence, in being dammed up at the bridge, and overflowing the adjacent plain. The little village of Islettes, just beyond it, was defended by a regular line of fortifications; of which our countryman, General Money, had the command. Here it was that the Duke of Brunswick met with his first resistance; and here, it is said, unavailingly lamented his want of precaution or knowledge. Several attacks were tried, but the enemy could make no impression; and here it was, as I have before stated, that he, on his march to Grand Pré, laid the foundation of all his sorrows.

The remainder of the road to Clermont was not less interesting: the same undulation of forest continued, though more diversified; and the rich tints of autumn added to the beauty of the scene. The town itself consists but of one street, wretchedly built; but the mountain which hangs over it affords a most magnificent prospect—not only of the immense forests that range on each side, but of the
country

country around Verdun, and along the Meuse to Stenay. On the top of this hill, which, when fortified, held a long siege against Condé, as the historians of the place informed us, and was reduced by hunger only, is built a chapel, consecrated to St. Denis; a picture of whom is drawn at a formidable length, notwithstanding the loss of his head, which the saint is carrying with great gravity on a bible, or book of homilies, under his arm. The journey which this holy man took, with his head literally beneath his shoulders, like Othello's monsters, is amongst the most splendid of the miracles of the Romish faith. I forget how many leagues he travelled in this singular style, but it is indifferent as to the reality of the miracle; it having been already observed, "*que c'est le premier pas qui coute.*" A picture of the Virgin hung by his side, surrounded by saints, as I conjectured, from their costume, otherwise their looks would have left us at some loss to have devised the nature of their devotion. On the side of this mountain is built the parish church, into which we entered whilst mass was performing, at which six priests assisted; the whole business of which could certainly be done as well by one, and leave as much religion as is necessary to the state at a sixth part only of the expence.

We had imagined, from the great number of handsome females whom we saw here, that they had assembled from various parts of the province to save themselves from the ordinary outrages of German soldiery. We communicated to them our conjectures, and congratulated them, from the pleasantness of their looks, on the good fortune of their escape. They accompanied their answer with an acknowledgment for the civility of the enquiry, and

and assured us that they were all natives of the Clermontois ; but with respect to the Hessians, who had been masters of it for some weeks, they had much more to apprehend from an attachment to their property than their persons. Nothing that could be taken away with any convenience, was left by these pillagers. The dress of the ladies had made part of their prey ; and no linen would have been found in the district, had not the vicinity of the forest made its concealment easy.

We are just returned from a ramble with a party of officers, who were our messmates at St. Mené-hould, and who are going across the country to join their respective corps at Dumourier's camp beyond Grand Pré. We have agreed to take our farewell dinner together, and then to return to our former station on the other side of the forest. What route we shall next take is not yet determined, as we have just learnt that Dumourier is making hasty steps towards Flanders ; and if we are to visit his camp, we must be very alert and expeditious. The main army of the Prussians is within a league or two.

Adieu.

LETTER IV.

Varennés, October 10,
First Year of the Republic.

HAVING gained farther intelligence that the army would be encamped on the morrow evening near the Grand Pré, we accepted the offer made us
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by our companions, and agreed to accompany them thither. As under the denomination of spoils came every thing that could readily be removed, horses and carriages, in the accustomed way, were luxuries to be had at no price; and as those of St. Menchould had been previously engaged to remove the persons and effects of the staff-officers and their attendants, we had been compelled to leave our voiture there, and to convey ourselves to Clermont in the independent manner I have related.

After considerable exertion, and a little of the use of that influence which the wearers of red coats and swords are too much in the habit of exercising, we procured a waggon and two horses to carry us and our baggage to Varennes. As we were ignorant of the country we had to traverse, not knowing whether the enemy had altogether abandoned it, and had some presentiment that the accommodations we should meet with could not at any rate be of the best sort, one of our officers, to whom the slightest vacuity of stomach was infinitely more dreadful than all the artillery of the Prussians, and whose first, and last, and most earnest thoughts and apprehensions were placed on the meat that perisheth, had taken care that, in the list of our effects, this sort of supply should not be wanting. He was remarkably well qualified for the post he had undertaken; and without his attention we should, in the regions of scarcity we have hitherto passed, have fared not very sumptuously. At our former quarters he was commandant of the kitchen after the first day; and never was any thing better regulated. A quarrel now and then arose between him and the stated professors, but he had always the address to carry his point: for, as his opponents were

were commonly females, he had the art of terrifying, when he had not the means to persuade. We had committed to him the care of our repast at Clermont: the preparation of which, for want of his immediate superintendence, we found, on our return from a ramble, not only neglected, but in no probable condition of at all taking place. It was necessary to seek our proveditor, and knowing that the feeling next his appetite was his love of rest, we were certain he could not have wandered far from the kitchen. After some research, we found him amongst the crowd in the church, and whispering to him our apprehensions, he started from his knees, mingling a number of small oaths with his prayers, to the astonishment of the religious around him; and having hurried from the church with more than usual velocity, he returned to his devotions, after whispering to us across the church, what, from its loudness, could be no secret to the rest of the congregation, that we should be served in half an hour at farthest.

Our road to Varennes lay along the skirts of the forest, in the direct route of the Prussian army. We reached it after the evening had closed; as the new mode of travelling we had adopted did not favour much of expedition. We found here frequent marks of military violence, in the demolition of the doors and windows of aristocratical and democratical houses; which had fared according to the principles of the occupiers of the place, who had been alternately patriots and emigrés. These last, with their allies, had, to the great joy of the inhabitants, taken their final leave; and the town was about to resume its accustomed tranquillity. The possession of this place was anticipated by the emigrés with great satisfaction; for as it was here that
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the ci-devant king was arrested in his flight, nothing less than a general massacre of the inhabitants, and the rasure of the houses was intended. Those of the inhabitants who were concerned in this event had taken their flight, and carried with them all that was valuable, or even moveable. The policy of the Prussian commander checked these atrocious intentions, and finding none left whose punishment would have answered any good purpose, they satisfied their vengeance in the manner I have related; taking care, according to the usage of predatory war, to plunder whenever they found the opportunity, or any thing worth taking, whether it belonged to those who were friendly or hostile to their cause. The person at whose house we have taken up our abode, was the first who contrived and executed the means of this celebrated detention. To him the postmaster of St. Menehould, who had preceded the king by a much nearer road across the forest, communicated his suspicions; and before any alarm was given, the passage through the town, by the overturning of a waggon at the bridge, was completely secured. When the king arrived, after changing horses at Clermont, he was stopped by eight of the national guard, notwithstanding the threats of Bouillé's military, who were there to receive him; and the commander having pointed two pieces of cannon, without either powder or balls, the king was made prisoner without farther resistance. He wore, they told us, his usual appearance of tranquillity and indifference. The queen was at first extremely agitated, and finding every offer to procure their deliverance rejected, her menaces and flatteries being equally disregarded, she burst into a passion of tears; but soon recovered her usual dignity. The

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toeſſin brought into Varennes ſuch an immense crowd of armed men, that all hopes of eſcape were vain; and Bouillé took flight. The national guard who arreſted, conducted their priſoners to Paris; and if experience could have made the ſlighteſt impreſſion, the king would have then learnt how little his preſent influence and conſideration weighed againſt the law and the will of the people. When the royal family arrived at Paris, inſtead of hearing, as they expected, on all ſides curſes and imprecations, the moſt profound and dignified ſilence, infinitely more reproachful, was preſerved. The fears of the captives were nevertheless extreme; for having twice before occaſioned a ſimilar cavalcade, and knowing how ferocious the people are ſometimes in their judgments, it was not impoſſible, conſidering the horrors to which the kingdom would have been delivered had the plan ſucceeded, and the numerous hypocriſies and perjuries of which the court had already been guilty, that ſummary juſtice would have been executed, without waiting the final proceſs of the law. On their arrival at the gate of the palace, this terror was at its height: the immense multitude that ſurrounded it, and filled the gardens, wore a menacing and formidable aſpect. A reinforcement of deputies was ordered by the aſſembly to conduct them through this throng. The king, preceded by one of theſe protectors, walked firſt, with his accuſtomed nonchalance. The preſs of the crowd on the queen terrified her much; her fears painted to her a thouſand bayonets; ſhe uttered two or three times cries, and made geſtures, expreſſive of her terror, and requeſted Mr. De S——, who was her immediate attendant, and from whom I had the relation, to addreſs the people to ſave her. The
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rest followed in order, and were treated with the same respect. As soon as the king entered the saloon of the Tuilleries, after ordering his usual refreshments, he observed, that he had had a very warm journey, which he undertook merely to see how the people liked the revolution; of whose attachment he was now convinced, as well as of their goodness. The queen, with the dauphin in her arms, walked about, alternately calm and agitated. The rest of the family were in tears; and of those who attended them, one ate, one talked, and the other wept. All that followed makes a part of history. The policy of the steps taken by the Constituent Assembly was then doubted; the present circumstances of the country, and the situation of this unhappy man, leave it no longer uncertain. Had he been suffered to escape, or had the Assembly immediately sent him from the kingdom, France would have had no more enemies than it has now to combat, and the opinion of the world would have been on their side; whereas his banishment now, if such be his sentence, will be regarded only as an act of farther rebellion, and the powers of Europe, which are hostile to liberty, will find some apology in forming alliances against it.

The retreat of the Prussians has brought back from the woods the fugitive inhabitants, but the plate and linen are still emigrated; for even the shadow of a Hessian is dreaded, between whom and plunder there seems a natural affinity. In some parts, the deepest forests have been the only dwelling of these Varennois, where they constructed huts with the branches of trees, and what other materials they could find, to shelter themselves from the inclemency of the weather. The wife of our host,

a delicate young woman, and handsome as a Clermontoise, with her little infant, has had no other dwelling for a month past. The fear of greater misfortunes, she tells me, has made her bear these inconveniences with firm resolution, but the frequent removal of their little habitation, and beds of damp straw, have occasioned her, and many of the female fugitives, indispositions which will not be readily removed. The inhabitants have made a little fête this afternoon, to testify their joy at this deliverance, and plant again the Tree of Liberty; but we arrived too late to share in the ceremony. What we could we did: our proveditor made his best arrangements, and surprised us with the plenty and elegance of his entertainment. We forgot for a moment our usual sobriety, in patriotic toasts and sentiments, and retired without a single fear, either of emigrés or Prussians. The linen, I observed, had not yet returned, and of course this part of our accommodation was in the style of the country. Fatigue is not delicate, and we should have slept profoundly, beyond even the interruption of dreams, had not some mischievous demon, three hours before day-break, alarmed us with the cry, that the enemy were at the gates. As I had not undressed myself, I was prepared for combat or flight in an instant: my fellow-traveller, whose toilette occupied two hours each day, though he is very remote from a beau, was arranged in two minutes. He was decidedly for flight, urged by two motives; one, the having an opportunity of assisting beauty in distress; for our hostess, but half dressed, and in a paroxysm of terror, was pressing close to her bosom her little child, heedless of the means of making her escape; the other was, the fear of being hanged by his countrymen, as he was a Prussian.

fian and a patriot. Leaving him to dress the child, and comfort the mother, whilst the husband was preparing the vehicle for their conveyance, and our quarter-master, busied in blowing up the embers, probably to provide for his breakfast, we repaired to the town-hall, after sending round two of our companions to alarm the guard and summon the municipality. This last had not yet entered on its functions. With the assistance therefore of the secretary, who was too old to escape, and the beadle, who added a lameness of fifty years to the infirmity of the last, after sending off the treasure of the town, which had just been brought back, we began to make a proces-verbal of our terror. Having adjusted this civil concern, we began to review the state of our military forces, whilst we dispatched couriers to inform us of the state of that of the enemy. Our little army was soon assembled, which, for its size and appearance, would scarcely have been looked at by a Prussian battalion, had it not lately been in the habit of flying before such light soldiery. The only officer of the national guard that could be found, and who had been chosen serjeant for his numerous military qualifications, but who, by his ordinary profession, was more accustomed to mow the chins of the Varennois than scalp the Prussians, had ceded the command of the garrison to the superior skill and rank of our chief. The collection was so truly singular and comique, that, though our new commandant would have feared to risk a combat with heroes of this assortment, my reverence for the cause, and also for the courage of these honest people, hinders me from indulging in the description. Whilst, however, the preparations for flight were going forward, and the most terrified of the female citizens had begun

the retreat; whilst we were deliberating whether the bridge should be barricaded, or whether we should admit the Prussians into the town, and then surround them, and take them all prisoners, messengers arrived in succession, informing us, that the enemy's troops had altered their direction, and were going off to Verdun by another road. We discerned them by our glasses on the hills at day-break, and we were very thankful that they had taken leave of us without calling.

It proved to be the rear of the Prussians, who were followed by the advanced guard of Kellerman's army, which we met at Grand Pré a few hours after. Thither we went, having adjusted all our affairs at Varennes, with the hope of finding Dumourier's camp in the neighbourhood. But his marches were more rapid than ours; for he had gone forward the preceding day to Vouziers, a village in the route of the Austrian column, about three or four leagues distant. This was the spot where Dumourier, with his little army, dared to oppose the mighty torrent; and had he been at all assisted, he might have opposed it with more effect. The pass at La Croix, in which the Prince de Ligne was killed, though it was bravely contended by the French, who twice repulsed the Austrians, was at length yielded to the superior force of the enemy. There has been circulated through the army a letter, found in the pocket of this prince, describing in very strong terms the distress to which they were driven, and the despair of either accomplishing their object, or even returning. Instead of welcome and greetings, as we were led to expect, says he, we find in every face a foe, troops of the line who beat us, national guards that stand our briskest fire, and peasants who assassinate us.

us. This letter may be one of the stratagems of war, *ma se non è vero, e ben trovato*, and has had considerable effect on the soldiery. The abandonment of the post at Grand Pré followed the other. This village has nothing that distinguishes it from other villages, except a magnificent castle belonging to M. de Semonville, which the Prussians had converted into an hospital.

Dumourier states the mortality here much too high: it was, nevertheless, dreadful, according to the report of the inhabitants, whose sole occupation, during the time they army remained, was that of digging graves, and burying the dead. To this office they were compelled by their conquerors, the effects of whose discipline were visible here in a variety of instances. The castle, independently of the injury it had received from being used as an hospital, had been most wantonly dismantled. Not only had its rich furniture been torn in pieces, the fragments of which remained strewed around, but the pictures, painted roofs, statues, and ornamented windows, had equally been the spoil of the licentious soldiery. Nothing could be more magnificent than the appearance of this chateau, which is built on a mountain, that commands an extensive view over a country rich and variegated on almost every side, but more particularly interesting on that which looks towards the forest of Argonne; along the skirts of which runs in meanders the river, which, flowing at the bottom, forms one of the difficulties of the pass. The hills which rise up from the river on the side of the castle, are clothed with vines to the summit; and this might have been the season of the vintage, had not the ill regulated appetites of the soldiers spoiled the owners of their harvest. This castle seems to
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have been founded in the height of the feudal period, if we may judge from its spacious courts, formidable gates, portcullis, deep moats, and lofty battlements: and here, all that one meets with of description in history, romance, or novels, of chiefs who, with a thousand valiant knights, lorded it over the domain, at war, or in league with other chiefs, resisting power, or aiding enterprize, according to their enmity or alliance; or in days of festival, whatever we read of tilts and tournaments,

“ Where throngs of knights, and barons bold,
 “ In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
 “ With store of ladies whose bright eyes
 “ Rain influence, and judge the prize
 “ Of wit, or arms ;”

might have found its prototype. Its external magnificence seemed fitted to defy all ordinary force, and therefore had suffered but little from the depredations of its last possessors, who left it at their departure so dismantled and loathsome in other respects, that it will require the storms of winter, and all the purifying breezes of many a spring, to dissipate the murky air that taints and infects it. Leaving this country, the Duke of Brunswick entered on those barren uninhabited plains, where famine came in aid of disease, to complete the ruin of his project. He measured back his steps through this same pass, in his retreat to Verdun; but I have not been able yet to learn why he was suffered to make it so unmo-
 lested.

I have observed somewhat freely on the conduct of the Duke of Brunswick. The large mass of reputation he had treasured up, without much desert, as far as I have had the means of learning,
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both as a general and a negociator, this unfortunate campaign has completely dissipated. He had the character of being a man of information and benevolence: but the events of this summer, added to the list of crimes of which he has been guilty against the cause of liberty, and the rights of mankind at other periods, have contributed very much to shake our belief. That he has been equally, with his master, the dupe of the emigrant princes, and the house of Austria, is well known. The only reparation he can make for this scandalous and unprovoked attack, is to leave these miscreants to their fate, of whose follies he has submitted to be the accomplice. Though he may have done much to soften the horrors of this war, and, by his influence, has contributed to lessen the effects of that rage which these desperate emigrés were bent on pouring on all around them, yet history will record many instances, which will not leave his reputation for the lesser virtues quite free from reproach.

It will be difficult, as this campaign will form a very important part of history, to know what judgment it will pass on this celebrated character. If it decide on the whole tenor of his life by the actions of the few weeks past, the cruelty of the manifesto legislator, the ignorance of the general, the folly of the negociator, and his being occasionally the accomplice of the atrocities of ferocious rebels, will sink this highly esteemed chief somewhat below the scale of the pity we feel for worth departed. I will not trouble you with any detail of the variety of anecdote which is commonly related, because nothing is more easy than the fabrication of a falsehood; and the evidence of an enemy is always to be suspected. One little story has interested me very much,

much, the outlines of which I learnt from the commissaries at St. Menehould. I have passed two or three hours with the hero to whom it relates, and though it does not absolutely criminate the Duke of Brunswick, it reflects no great credit on his honour or humanity. The venerable old man I refer to, has been for some time a prisoner in the dungeons of Verdun. He was a member of the Constituent Assembly, and conducted himself with calmness and moderation, which is the best proof of patriotism, and eventually the best support of liberty. We scarcely ever heard of him at the tribune, but he was an incessant attendant on the business of his office. At the dissolution of the Assembly, his conduct was so approved by his fellow-citizens, that he was unanimously named by them to the chief office of his department. He had been indefatigable, amongst those who were more immediately within his circle, in explaining the laws, reconciling disputes, and forming establishments for the poor; and, removed from the knowledge of the intrigue that was destroying the constitution, he was earnest in promoting the love of it, though sensible of many of its defects. In common with others, he had sworn to remain at his post; and, uninfluenced by the example of those who betrayed, or in the moment of danger abandoned it, he made no compromise between his conscience and his safety; and at his post he was found when the enemy entered Varennes. Though his house was previously devoted to plunder, it was much beyond their expectation to have found its inhabitant, who awaited with calmness their arrival. After many indignities, he was carried off to the Hotel de Ville for examination. The trial was neither long nor formal: he was found guilty of being

being a patriot, and, as he had no means or inclination to disprove his guilt, he was sentenced by these disinterested and impartial judges to the dungeons of Verdun. In vain did Mr. George's remonstrate to them on the rights of nations, and the laws of war. In vain did he plead his not being taken in arms, his not even having arms in his house, and his never having borne them. In vain did he plead that the office he held was under a constitution sanctioned by the king, in the execution of which office his exertions had been bent on making that constitution respected. In vain did he plead even the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto, which, harsh and cruel as it was, did not attain his conduct. In vain did he plead his age, his numerous infirmities, and the immediate indisposition under which he laboured, which imprisonment would only serve to increase; and that the damp of a dungeon would necessarily make his prison his grave. His judges were inexorable; and the motives he urged against the sentence, made them the more earnest to have it carried into execution. Whether a sentence be just or unjust, unless the crime be extremely heinous, we pity the offender, and seek every means to soften the harshness of the law, by the offices of humanity. One would have thought indefinite punishment in a dungeon a sufficient evil. But his judges were of a different opinion; and although he repeatedly begged permission to borrow money to pay his conveyance, they asserted that he merited no such indulgence; and their final determination was, that he should walk the eighteen miles on foot to Verdun. His offer of borrowing money to pay his conveyance, arose from his inability of paying for it himself, since, when his house was entered, the plunder of his

property had taken place in a style more than usually severe of military execution. One with a hatchet broke open his bureau, though he offered to give them the keys. But the hatchet was more expeditious ; and, together with his papers, money to the amount of 1500 livres was taken away. Another called for the plate, and poized the candlesticks in his hand, which, not proving to be silver, were restored to their place. What there was that was valuable was carried off, whilst he remained a witness of the depredation.—But who were these plunderers, think you ? Austrian, or rather Hessian soldiers, who, dragging on a miserable existence at three sous a day, might find a thousand apologies for not resisting such a temptation ; who might plead the necessity of their nature, and ask some excuse in following the habits and example of their master, between whom and plunder there seems an original and hereditary affinity.—No !—one blushes for the pride of aristocracy, and the dignity of princes, when we learn that the rapacious hand of the Marquis de B—— demolished the cabinet, and seized on the money ; and that one of more elevated rank was an accomplice in the theft.

To vulgar and ordinary minds this might appear a little improbable and shocking ; but those who are best acquainted with these elevated characters, will tell you, there is nothing in it very extraordinary. The orator who panegyricizes priesthood and nobility, has declared to the world, that “ Kings are necessary lovers of low company.” And the natural inference is, that such intercourse must promote similar propensities. M. Georges had neither any part of his money or plate returned him : but the physical impossibility of reaching Verdun,

dun, according to the letter of his sentence, being made clear to his judges, they indulged him with riding on a cart loaded with fusils, which they were sending thither. The Duke of Brunswick, apprised of his approach, met him on the road, accompanied by his suite, which was swelled to more than the usual size. The general saluted the prisoner with much glee and apparent satisfaction. "Oh, Jacobin! Jacobin!—support of Petion! support of Petion!"—To which the patriot replied, "that, whether he was a Jacobin or Feuillant, he knew but of two classes of citizens, the good and the bad, and he had the pride to number himself at all times under the former." He was then charged with having been one of their greatest enemies; in having promoted subscriptions for the arming of volunteers; in having subscribed large sums himself; and in having conducted himself greatly amiss, as a member of the Constituent Assembly. "To these accusations," says the old man, "I answered, as I had partly answered before, that with respect to my conduct as a deputy of the National Assembly, I shall enter on no justification, but refer myself to the conscience of M. de P——, who was my colleague, and whose evidence, from his personal attachment to your Highness, cannot be suspected—let him speak—he is at your right hand. As to the other charges, I not only plead guilty, but glory in my crime. I own I have promoted subscriptions to arm men in defence of their rights, and repel invaders: I have given money myself, and lament that I was not richer, that I might have given more. It is true also, that I am your enemy; and the assurance that I have been effectually so, will prove the greatest source of consolation under my sufferings. For I shall

shall not feel them heavy, since they are inflicted by those who are not only my enemies, but those of liberty and my country."

A transient flush passed over the faces of those around him : but recovering a little from the embarrassment of such a reply, the Duke, in a milder tone, observed to him, that, as titles were abolished, he was surprised that he had addressed him so unconstitutionally. " The law does not allow me to address free men by any name but that of citizen ; I was not inadvertent in the mode of my address to your Highness ; but I was not willing to misapply the title."

It would have been magnanimous in the Duke, to have examined more accurately into the nature of the crimes, alledged against M. Georges, and to have softened the severity of the sentence : and, had he any penetration, he might have discovered that men like these were not easily subdued ; instead of which, he confirmed the punishment, and the sentence was put into execution, with all its rigour. M. Georges suffered considerably from this mode of life, so contrary to his usual habits—" but," said this venerable patriot, " when I reflected on the height of the situation in which these circumstances had placed me, and compared it with the meanness of theirs, I felt a superiority, an elevation of mind, which supported me more than I could have hoped under my sufferings : for, had it not been for this enthusiasm, the state of atmosphere in my room, and my food, which at first was bread and water, would soon have released me from their malice, and my confinement." He was visited by several of these emigrés, who treated him very insolently ; and once by the Prince de Condé, with whom he conversed, as he told us, à la hauteur de repub-

republicanism. The latter part of his confinement was rendered much more tolerable, as he was visited and comforted by Prussian officers. This relaxation from the former rigour, was obtained in proportion to the degree of estimation in which the Duke began to hold his persecutors; as M. Georges learnt from his visitants, that a farther acquaintance with his real character had made a considerable impression on the Duke's mind. He ought, indeed, to have made amends, by an immediate release, for the injustice he had done: but M. Georges is happy not to have owed him this obligation, since he was exchanged for the secretary of the King of Prussia.

The siege of Verdun begins in a few days, unless the Prussians surrender it on the summons. The French army is very inferior to theirs; but terror has so seized them, that they now deem a retreat a victory. My next letter will therefore most probably be from Verdun.

ADIEU.

LETTER V.

Verdun, October 16, 1792.
First Year of the French Republic.

THE French army has been for some days in possession of this town; which was surrendered at the summons of General Dillon. The terror that seized the Prussians when they retreated from their camp

camp at La Lune, the last post which they occupied on their road to Paris, has accompanied them hither. Bournonville had so harassed them on the first days of their retreat, that Dumourier thought it unnecessary to display any longer his whole force; and therefore went off to Flanders, leaving Kellerman's division in the pursuit. The Prussians, having latterly displayed more activity, had escaped, without farther molestation, to Verdun, whilst Dillon, who held the Hessians in check at the pass of the forest of Argonne, who yet had seen nothing of actual service, but in the plunder of unarmed citizens and women, has driven them with his cannon from all their positions, and forced them to seek the same shelter with their allies. It is the effect of misfortune on generous minds to attack them more strongly, according to the extent of the danger or oppression. These unhappy fugitives, overwhelmed with shame, and conscious of deserving the evils with which they were surrounded, made their unfortunate condition still worse, like Milton's fallen angels, by railing accusations and mutual ill offices. The fanfaronnade of the French nobility, their haughty pretensions, and the Persian luxury of their march, made a singular contrast with the rigid discipline and simple manners of the Prussian soldiers. The hereditary hatred of the Prussians to the Austrians was smothered, not extinguished. Having one great object in view, in their union against France, they had agreed to forget ancient enmities; and made temporary sacrifices of almost insurmountable prejudices. But when Dumourier, like a mighty magician, stretched forth his hand, the enchanted palace fell to the ground with a horrid crash: the gay, fantastic visions, which had danced before their disordered optics, disappeared. The stupid
Prussian,

Prussian, who thought himself illuminated in proportion as his moral sight was really darkened, began to recover from his delusion: and, finding himself the dupe of the perfidy of Austria, and the malignity of the rebels, repented his folly, when its excess had made repentance fruitless and unavailing. The touchstone of misfortune, which always confirms the character of the just, applied to evil spirits, makes them start up in their proper and original forms. These heroes, who were associated as sworn friends to succour royalty in distress, and to extirpate traitors; and who whilst prosperity gladdened their way, found the feelings of fraternity increasing; now aggravate their manifold evils, by the performance of all the possible ill offices which their natural propensities and hatred no more disguised, and contempt no longer concealed, can find the means of exercising towards each other. Whether the knowledge of this misunderstanding, which they in no way affected to hide, had made the French commander presume on their not even agreeing to defend themselves against a common attack; or whether emboldened by success, in having already struck terror, he depended on its continuance; with an army of only 15,000 men, and an ill placed battery of only ten pieces of small bore, at a slight distance from the citadel, he sent his summons, demanding an immediate surrender. The commander of Verdun, in return, requested a suspension of hostilities, and conference with the French general at the same time. Kalkreuth, who is in the confidence of the King of Prussia, did not pretend that he was furnished with any official powers; but, in conversing on the present circumstances, he hoped that some means might be devised to promote a sincere reconciliation

ciliation between the French nation and the King of Prussia, and having always entertained the highest respect for the French character, he expressed the singular pleasure he should take in promoting an accommodation which might be advantageous to both nations. He was answered by Dillon, that, as a general of the French republic, his sole business was to demand an immediate answer to the summons he had given: that the evacuation of the French territory was a preliminary to all negotiation: that the revolution had not been lightly undertaken, nor effected without difficulty; and that it had the concurrence of the whole nation, which could not behold, without the highest indignation, its domestic arrangements interrupted, and its provinces invaded by foreign forces, when it had declared that it renounced for ever offensive war; a declaration by which it would obtain as many friends as there were philosophers in Europe: that nothing could be even thought of in the way of accommodation till the territory was completely evacuated, and the republic, with the powers delegated to the National Convention, acknowledged: that the King of Prussia could furnish a convincing proof of his good disposition towards the French nation, if he would separate himself from his allies without farther delay, and assist the French against their common enemy, in giving freedom to the Low Countries; and he should recollect, that to a great, a good prince, no alliance can be so grateful as that of a free people. Kalkreuth assured him, that, did it depend on him alone, this alliance should be readily accomplished; that he had ever opposed this war, which he found as impolitic as it was unjust: that the immediate surrender of Verdun would be some earnest of the King's desire to reconcile himself

himself with France, and that the speedy evacuation of Longwi would be a farther instance. But with respect to the immediate rupture of the treaty with their present allies, the principle of honour compels them, like travellers who have set out on a journey, to finish it together; though it is no reason, that, having travelled once, they should agree to begin anew: that he left him full of esteem for the French nation and himself; and that in reporting their conversation to the king, he would not fail to communicate to him what he thought; that he hoped much from its success; that no one could better appreciate the immense advantages of such an alliance; and that he could wish to be sent as ambassador to Paris, to assist in forwarding so happy an event. This general, who appears to have more wisdom, and also more free principles than might be expected from the folly and despotism with which he is surrounded, held a conference of this sort a few days since; for when the French were pressing on the enemy somewhat closer than the regulations of war, virtually agreed on, permitted, he requested to come to an explanation with the French commander. As they could not agree on the point they were discussing, he begged leave to invite the Duke of Brunswick to the conference; to which General Galbaud consented. I could repeat to you briefly the substance of the conversation that took place; but the detail will be more interesting; and you may depend on its authenticity, as it is taken literally from the memorandums of the general, who has obliged me with them.

D. of Brunf. Is it you who have placed these pieces here? They have done us a great deal of mischief; and I own I cannot conceive how it came

came into your head to place them so near our redoubt.

Galbaud. Your observation is the best proof of the goodness of our operations. We are, it is true, pretty close to you; but our soldiers fear no danger when they are labouring for their country.

D. of Brunf. General Kalkreuth has spoken to me of your proposal respecting the wood. You must agree with me, that its cession might be rendered difficult, if I were less sparing of human blood; but, before we finish this business, let us discourse a little about your nation. I love it; and have shewn it more than once. I am sorry that Dumourier, with respect to my last manifesto, should have discovered so much ill-humour on account of some inconsequent words which he happened to find there. Those expressions were meant for the vulgar. People of sense know how to estimate them; and I am astonished that Dumourier should have given them so much more consequence than they were entitled to.

Galbaud. Give me leave to ask you, if the French people, having recovered their liberty, were not equally formed with General Dumourier to understand the language of truth? Imagine if they could read without indignation expressions which treated their rights with contempt, or if they could have permitted any of their generals so far to forget the respect he owes his sovereign as to pay attention to any who did not acknowledge the national sovereignty. I own that, had I been in Dumourier's place, I should have acted as he has done.

D. of Brunf. I do not dispute by any means the right which your nation has to regulate its own government;

vernment; but has it chosen that form which is best suited to its character? This is what is generally doubted; and indeed when I came into France, I had no other view than to concur in establishing order.

Saboriliere. Give me leave to ask you, what could have furnished you with authority to interpose between the people of France and their own concerns?

This conversation, according to the memorandum, was here interrupted by Galbaud, who looking round perceived the deserter Klinglin, who was lately marechal-de-camp in the French service, on horseback, in uniform, and with a white cockade. In his surprise he called out, What! is that M. Klinglin? who made him no reply; but Kalkreuth whispered to the duke, who turned round, and gave him a contemptuous look; which made him retire, very much ashamed of his reception. The duke observed to Galbaud, that he saw how he treated the emigrants; and that he never loved traitors. Do with them what you will, we care very little about them; but I insist that the French nation will never know her true interests, until she returns to principles of more moderation.

Saboriliere. I will ask the Duke of Brunswick, if it is the author of the manifesto who is now addressing us? If so, the only answer I should give him would be cannon-balls. If, on the contrary, it is the friend of humanity who holds us this language, the best proof he can give us of his favourable dispositions, is to evacuate the French territory, before our armies, which are every day increasing, compel him. If you are willing to treat for the surrender of Verdun, I have no doubt but
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the nation will grant you all the conditions which may be suitable to its interests, and to the vengeance it ought to take for the violation of its rights and territory.

D. of Bruns. The French are an astonishing people:—they have scarcely formed themselves into a republick, when they assume the tone of republicans. I cannot say any thing to you at present on this subject, nor on that which has introduced me to you; I must speak to the king. Let us agree to a suspension of hostilities between our videttes for twenty-four hours, and let every thing remain in statu quo. To-morrow General Kalkreuth shall be with you; he is in the king's confidence; and whether it be Dumourier, or any one he shall commission, the general will confer with him. I am very happy to have formed your acquaintance. As to you, General Galbaud, I see with pleasure an old officer of artillery. You have shewn me in your battery a specimen of the talents of the old royal corps. Continue both of you to serve your country well; and believe me, that, in spite of the style of manifestoes, we cannot help esteeming those who interest themselves so much to secure its independence.

Kalkreuth remained a few minutes in conversation after the Duke retired. When he left the French generals, the soldiers, both Prussian and French, who had been in conference also, drinking together, took leave of each other, and the latter calling out, more vociferously than usual, "Vive la Nation," Kalkreuth discovering some marks of terror, demanded if his person was in safety? to which Galbaud replied, in republican loyalty there can be no treachery; and Kalkreuth, after farther professions of friendship, returned to his camp.

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I have given you this conversation at some length, because characters are best understood when they develop themselves. Of its authenticity you may have the most perfect assurance, if any credit is to be given to the parties themselves, on one side at least, from whom I immediately obtained it; and it is so far of importance, as it proves what has always been asserted, that Prussia has been made the dupe of the emigrant Princes, and the step-ladder of ambition to the House of Austria; of which itself seems so convinced, and the experience that accompanies that conviction has been so dearly purchased, that if the French will descend somewhat from this republican tone which the duke accuses them of having attained, they might, without much difficulty, make this enemy neutral, if not gain him as an ally. No arrangement, the French general declares, can take place till the French territories are evacuated. This will speedily be done, if the present disposition for flight continues; but there is such an impulse given to the nation, that it will be difficult to lay the foundation of any arrangement where the principles of both parties are so directly opposite. The Prussian and French generals, and the commissaries from the Convention, have held several conferences together respecting immediate regulations, and mutual conveniences; the adjustment of which has been so much to the advantage of the fugitives, that the Duke of Brunswick has thought proper to send them another manifesto; not of menaces and insults, of devastation and death, according to the old school; but of humility and friendship, of consideration and respect, of admiration and gratitude for their attention and humanity. I have seen his letter to
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the generals, expressive of these sentiments; and, considering the tendency of the conferences that have taken place at Grand Pré, at the camp of La Lune, before and since the army entered Verdun, if his attempts to persuade his master to abandon this enterprise be not successful, he will probably leave him to fulfil his own destiny, and make some compensation for the injuries he has done the cause of liberty, by withdrawing from these stupid despot's farther services; whilst he quits the territories of the republic, as Pyrrhus retired from Italy, full of respect and admiration of his enemies; with this difference, indeed, that Pyrrhus had some victories to cheer him in his retreat.

Since my residence at Verdun, I have been alternately the guest of generals Kellerman and Valence at the Hotel de Ville. Before the army entered I was indebted to the kindness and hospitality of general Money, whom I have already introduced to you at the pass of the forest, and who had made the curé's house his quarters, in a little village on the banks of the Meuse. The king of Prussia was our nearest neighbour for a day or two, having taken temporary possession of a house on the opposite bank, whilst his army evacuated Verdun. The view from our village presented to us, on the right, the two divisions of the French army encamped on adjoining hills, intersected by a valley, in which Dillon had fixed his head quarters. The Prussian camp was arranged along the mountains of St. Michel, the sides of which were covered continually with horses, waggons, troops, and artillery; whilst Verdun, with its venerable towers, and heretofore menacing citadel, made a charming point of prospect between both; and the river, swelled by the late rains, overflowing the level above the town, and giving itself the appearance of considerable

considerable magnitude added much to the richness of the scene. Our host is not greatly displeased at our departure. Though he was constitutional and fermenté, yet I could readily perceive that he had a few points now and then to settle with his conscience. He was, however, a pious and sensible man, with more information than is commonly found in village priests; and, though St. Austin, St. Bernard, and authors of the same saint-like description, with a variety of Confessions of Faith, and books of canonical regulations, were in continual obtrusion, we discerned a profane corner, where lurked Cicero, and Seneca, and, stranger still! Racine and Corneille, with Lucan, Ovid, and Virgil. After exhausting every military and political topic with the general, when the weather did not permit us to walk or ride out, I made a party in the kitchen with the curé, for every other room in the house was occupied; by the fire-side of which we discussed literary and religious questions, read Latin hymns, and the Metamorphosis, and wandered from the streams of Babylon, on the banks of which he had fancied himself settled for some weeks past, to the plains of Pharsalia. The habitudes of men are not easily altered, those especially which have the sanction of religious persuasion. This good priest has no great relish for the profane reformers of the National Convention; not that he denies the necessity, but dislikes the means: an ecclesiastical synod, it seems, would have done it with more efficacy and grace. It is possible that a priest, as such, may have an attachment to liberty; but the instances are so rare, that the singularity of the exception almost confirms the rule. There is so immense a distance between religion itself, the basis of equality, and its

its human establishments, that the functionaries of the latter can have no taste or feeling for the principles of the former. The French, therefore, in decreeing equality and the continuance of a particular establishment salaried by the state, have violated their own declaration, and acted with all the inconsistency of half-sighted legislators. After they have gone so far, they may safely venture one step more, and give that which they despise whilst they pretend to venerate it, religion, one advantage which they do not deny to any other principle, the liberty of establishing itself by the ordinary means of knowledge; and then its influence would be better felt, and its ministers more honourably protected. I will not, however, charge these law-givers with debasing what they do not understand; for they are yet too ignorant to distinguish the principle from its corruption, and therefore always confound them. I know nothing more pleasant than the religious discussions of these philosophers. A priest can scarcely be more ignorant; and yet the parade of their ignorance and contempt of the knowledge of others, keeps such equal proportion, that an alteration of the course of nature might as easily be effected, as any impression made of the importance of religious principles on the minds of these politicians. They have been accused of destroying a government without having first erected another—this charge is puerile—the materials were ready, and would easily, on the removal of the former, be arranged on the same scite. But in this avowed and indiscriminate contempt of religion, though they do not overthrow morality, of which they have also been unjustly accused, yet, in seeking to build it on the basis of public utility alone, the best human foundation indeed on which it can be built, they have acted unwisely,

wisely, since they have taken away that which furnishes the strongest motives for its observance, the motives furnished by the prospects and assurances of revelation. We left this parsonage-house, as I have observed, to the great joy of its legal possessor, though he had experienced nothing but politeness on the part of his last guest; whose humanity, and habitual care of his soldiers, have not less entitled him to their love, than his courage as an officer to their confidence. The Hessians had not left impressions so favourable. They had despoiled the finest of his vintage, robbed him of his whole store of provisions, stolen his plate and linen, and, what grieved his heart infinitely more than these, had taken away with them a pretty and innocent damsel, one of his parishioners, who lived with him, assisted his housekeeper in her lighter occupations, and whom he regarded (the tear stealing down his cheek as he told me), from her little accomplishments and gentle demeanour, as his daughter. He had heard nothing of her till yesterday evening, when her father returned with the tidings that he had found her at a small hamlet, twelve miles distant, where the charity of a peasant had given her a little straw, having found her wandering through the fields, reduced by hunger, and the victim of disease; so that when her father arrived, little hopes remained that her miserable existence could be prolonged to receive the last offices of religion, which she earnestly entreated from the hands of her master. It seems that these ruffians had carried her to their camp near Clermont, where they kept her in transfer to each other, till she found the means of making her escape; and it was in the act of returning home, and avoiding the high road, to escape farther outrage, that she lost

her way, and took refuge in the cottage of the peasant. It would seem, from my continual denunciation of these Hessians, that all the individual miseries of the war were occasioned by them. The histories of their cruelty are too numerous to be recited; the detail of which can gratify no mind that deserves to be gratified; but I am averse to credit any but those which I receive from the parties themselves, and then hear them with much allowance. I have the fullest conviction, however, that the curé was plundered. I believe the story of the father, whose misery is heightened from the success of his wanderings in search of his daughter; and I believe the post-master of Domballe, who, whilst earnestly entreating to keep a favourite horse, when twenty others were in the act of being stolen, and holding one part of the bridle somewhat more expressive of his regret at parting than was agreeable to the hussar who held the other, received a severe stroke of a hanger on his hat; and, when he applied for redress to the Prince of Hesse, who had taken possession of his house for head quarters, was answered, that, with respect to his horses, he should be paid for them when the king was reinstated; and, as for himself, he ought to be thankful that his hat was not his head.

The entrance of the French army into Verdun was accompanied by none of the effusions of joy with which those meet, who are the deliverers and the delivered. Verdun has hitherto been noted for its confectionary: it will carry down to posterity another title to celebrity, its cowardice. Nothing could equal the terror of the inhabitants, when they understood the town was to be surrendered, and that no conditions were made for themselves. General pillage was the mildest punishment they expected;

pected; and, the National Assembly having ordered the rasure of Longwi, it was not supposed that, when those interested in the pillage were to be the executioners, much respect or mercy would be shewn. The generals provided against the commission of these horrors, though the good faith of the soldiers, and their obedience, would have been a sufficient warrant. A few companies only were stationed in the town, till the Prussians had proceeded farther on their route; when the French army marched directly through it, and occupied their places, without bestowing on the inhabitants in their passage any thing but looks of indignation and contempt. The generals and commissaries proceeded to the creation of provisional administrative powers; having put the former magistrates under arrest, till their conduct be examined by the Convention. That the town surrendered more readily to the French arms than it was taken at first by the Prussians will plead much in their favour. Though it is strongly fortified, yet it is so commanded on almost every side, that it could never be expected to hold for any time against a tolerable force: all that art can do had been done: there wanted nothing but a little more courage in the inhabitants, and the removal of the hills that hang over it, to have put it properly in a state of effectual resistance.

I have passed two or three pleasant days in society not merely military. Madame de V—— has enlivened our circle by her wit and beauty; Colonel de L—— is a favourite of the muses as well as a warrior, "*Augur et fulgente decorus arcu.*" He gave us his translation of the Greek ode which celebrates the Tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogiton; but he would be better known to the

world as the author and composer of the *Marseillois* song, which we heard sung with so much accompaniment at the theatre, when we saw the representation of Brutus, just after the tenth of August. Two officers with stentorian lungs made our hall re-echo a day or two since, who came to partake of our desert: thirty or forty at table made a decent chorus; and we had a sort of accompaniment still more animating than that of the theatre, the view from our windows of the Prussian army on the mountains preparing for farther retreat.

It is to be hoped the accommodation will take place, which the conferences I have related, and the friendly intercourse I have described, seem to promise. Whether any more solemn treaty than that made with the Austrians binds the king of Prussia, I am at present ignorant. We have heard of the confederacies of the princes of Europe against the principles of the French constitution, and men of vehement minds and sanguinary tempers have called on them to arm in defence of their general cause. They may arm, and for a moment the law of force may wear its accustomed superiority; but, as despotism has been effectually resisted in remoter times, when the light of philosophy had scarcely dawned, and the rights of men were little understood, can it be expected, in these days of universal knowledge and illuminated reason, that any of the human race, who are placed within the reach of the blessings of freedom, will remain much longer deprived of their enjoyment? I rejoice, said Lord Chatham, that America has resisted.—Millions of voices from every enslaved corner of the globe will echo the sentiment of the venerable patriot, since in this and latter times she forms a model for themselves. France has resisted also; and,
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like America, she has conquered. Its former despotic force, joined with the free principles of America, obtained the victory there; and these last becoming eventually, in every country, the advanced guard of their enterprise, insures the triumph of truth and liberty. It has been objected, that the lightness of the French character but ill accords with that sentiment which belongs peculiarly to freemen; and that, habituated to a certain point of political servitude, it can neither feel nor appreciate the real value of political freedom. I will not dispute the frivolity of the general character arising from a frivolous education, or that their follies, and even crimes, have been naturalized into manners from the continued contemplation of those manners in a corrupted court, where hitherto all their views have been habitually directed. But what I contend for, and what will be obvious to any observer is, that there is sufficient energy, and firm foundation to build up a people zealous of good works, worthy of the principles they have now adopted, and of the destiny to which they aspire. Already a wonderful reverse has been effected. The effeminacy of the Sybarite, with which we have hitherto reproached them, has been changed alternately into Roman firmness and Tartarean ferocity. Effeminacy and cruelty are oftentimes not remote from each other; but if there are pages in the history of the revolution which the friend of liberty will try to efface with his tears; there are volumes also which he will hold up with pride to the admiring world. The gallants whom I have seen parading in the public walks with their mistresses, in all the style of dissipation and dissipation, are now transformed into hardy soldiers, exposed to all the inclemencies of an intemperate season, with scarcely tents to cover them, and

and making often the bare earth their bed. But, if there be any thing in locality of situation to give energy to sentiment; if you could draw deeper sighs with Petrarch in wandering along the valley, and hanging over the fountain of Vaucluse; or feel stronger enthusiasm, and more poetic soul, in visiting the hallowed tomb of Virgil—you will find some excuse for my intemperance, if it be such, when you know that I am writing to you from the table at which Beaurepaire wrote his adieu, and in the room in which he died.

You remember the event: the perilous circumstances in which we were then placed, caused it to be more slightly noticed than it deserved. When the Prussians had invested Verdun, and summoned Beaurepaire to surrender, the Duke of Brunswick received for answer, that the command of the place was intrusted to him by the French nation; that he felt himself responsible for the trust, and should yield it only with his life. The Duke signified to him in reply, that, did the defence of the place depend on him alone, he had no doubt but it would be well maintained, though he must be very sensible that the works which he had erected, and the advantage given by the possession of all the neighbouring heights, would make it impossible for him to maintain it long; but, before he confirmed himself in this resolution, he would refer him to a decree of the Assembly, which gave the municipality, in all cases similar to the present, the controul of the commander; and begged him as a good citizen to take their advice, and re-consider the summons he had given. The sudden surrender of Longwi by its governor, had induced the Assembly to pass this decree, having at that moment more confidence in the courage of the municipal officers of fortified towns,

towns, than in the good faith of the commanders. But, as the event proved, it was a law fitted for Longwi alone—for when Beaurepaire, compelled by the decree to follow the sarcastic exhortation of the Duke of Brunswick, consulted the civil officers, he found the prospect of 60,000 Prussians on the hills, and a few shells which they had thrown into the town by way of amusement, too strong proofs for their municipal nerves. All the arguments that valour could inspire; all the persuasions that patriotism could dictate: all the expostulations that the sense of shame could provoke, Beaurepaire urged in vain. To die for their country was no part of their municipal creed, and they were nearly unanimous to surrender. Once more he attempted to animate them: they were deaf to his remonstrances, and signed the capitulation. He had resolved to make his way through the enemy, with as many as he could prevail on to follow him; but his purpose was betrayed. Overcome with shame, with all the indignation that arises in the breast of a soldier at the prospect of dishonour, and the virtuous sentiments which give more than elevation to the soul of the patriot, he withdrew from this tribunal, whose coward souls, like the dahees of Casimere, feared nothing so little as disgrace, and nothing so much as danger. Verdun was surrendered. The municipality was safe, and received the compliments of the Prussian commander. Beaurepaire was gone beyond the reach of their flattery or their triumph. Like Cato, his indignation, the passion of great souls, had overcome every other sentiment: he could not survive the liberty of his country; and, more virtuous than Cato, since the ignominy of gracing the triumph of Cæsar was too personal a motive, he sought refuge from dishonour in death.

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The concierge tells me, that he heard the report of the pistol, but had no idea that it proceeded from this chamber, as he had but a few minutes before, on entering it, found the commander writing with such earnestness, that he was heedless of his being there. Beaurepaire was found fallen from his chair, with a few signs of life yet remaining; they placed him on the bed, where he instantly expired.

“ The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
 “ Is privileged beyond the common walks
 “ Of virtuous life.”

The present was a sanctuary too sacred for municipal officers or Prussians, and therefore had been kept shut, from a variety of motives, by both parties, till the arrival of the French, when the hospitality of Kellerman gave it me for my residence whilst in Verdun. The National Assembly have decreed funeral honours to the memory of this generous commander, who, urged by those impassioned motives which are peculiar to elevated minds, had chosen death rather than survive the cowardly surrender which his efforts could not prevent, and which, therefore, in a life of unfulfilled honour, would have left no stain. I know not how rigid moralists will estimate this action, or whether they will enter into the feelings of the Assembly, who, by ordering his remains to be deposited in the temple dedicated to great men, have given their sanction to this act of virtue, and destroyed that prejudice so fatal to heroism, which, taking from man the privilege of choosing the moment of his death, takes from him that firmness of soul, which is so necessary to bear it. No ages have been more fertile in examples of great courage, heroic virtues,
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and talents useful to society, those in which Stoicism inspired that energy which led men to devote their lives to the defence of the republic; and none, in general, have more honoured mankind, than those who, rising superior to prejudices, have shortened their course by a voluntary termination.

The Assembly have provided liberally for his widow, and placed his son under the protection of the nation. Its president, Hérault de Léchelles, was ordered to communicate this decree to Madame Beaurepaire, which he has done in the following letter:

Le brave Beaurepaire, votre époux, a terminé par une mort héroïque quarante ans d'une vie précieuse, il n'a pu se résoudre à vivre dans une ville qui n'étoit pas Française, il laisse un grand modèle à tous les soldats de la liberté. L'Assemblée Nationale, sensible à votre perte, qui est à la fois une perte publique, me charge de vous écrire, et de vous envoyer le décret qu'elle vient de rendre; vous y verrez Madame que la nation Française est digne d'avoir des Brutus pour le défendre; puisse la reconnaissance de la patrie consoler votre douleur, et celle du fils qui vous reste; son père est mort pour la liberté—puisse-t-il vivre long tems pour elle? Il ne peut manquer d'être un héros s'il se rappelle toujours, qu'il est le fils de Beaurepaire.

On his tomb is to be engraven this inscription.
 “ Il aimait mieux mourir, que capituler avec les tyrans.”

And think you, my patriotic friend, that minds like these can be subdued? No—liberty will be saved; and the love of their country be the ruling passion, whilst there continues to exist such men as the volunteer soldiers of the battalions of Paris,

such undaunted guardians of the rights of men as Georges of Varennes, and such heroic commanders as Beaurepaire of Verdun.

LETTER VI.

Rheims, November 2, 1793.
First Year of the French Republic.

LEAVING the generals in pursuit of the enemy, in their own territory, after having driven them from that of France (for Longwi was evacuated more readily than Verdun), we have since employed ourselves in visiting the neighbouring frontier towns, and wandering over some of those parts of the country which have been the scenes of action during this memorable campaign. From the walls of this city detachments of the invaders had been frequently seen; as the camp of Suippe, the last but one before the retreat, commanded in equal directions both this town and Chalons. We propose remaining here a day or two to repair our vehicle, which has been completely disjointed, as well as to procure some little repose to ourselves. This city is chiefly noted as the place sacred to the consecration of the kings of France; but though its occupation be gone, at least for the present, the holy relic, with which the Holy Ghost complimented them for this important purpose, yet remains. The truth of the history of this sanctified present has, at all times, been

been doubted by philosophers, and those who reason; and it has been suspected, that the faith of priests and courtiers has not been always unshaken. But the truth of a good story ought never to be doubted; and as it turned out so much to the profit of these two orders, they were not much interested to enquire into the evidence. If you have any curiosity to examine the fact, you will find a detailed account of the miracle in Dom Reutheli's *Glories of the Church Triumphant*; or you will meet with as much as will satisfy you in Voltaire's *Abridgement* of this part of its *Glories*, and his lively comments on the miracle in question.

The country through which we have passed, has been under the government of the Austrian and emigrant armies for some months; as it was that part which bordered more immediately on Brabant, from which their column marched parallel with that of the Prussians in their advance towards Paris. These armies approached at the two passes of La Croix and Grand Pré, as I have before mentioned, and formed their junction immediately after. The capture of those neighbouring towns would have been of great moment; and as detachments frequently appeared at their gates, which they might have entered without much resistance, it appears singular that it was not accomplished. The forest of Argonne, indeed, and the visitation of Heaven in rain, and pestilence, and famine, stood between them: for which the holy flask, in remoter ages, as the palladium of Rheims, would have been worshipped with more devout gratitude, and held up as an object of greater sanctity and veneration.

I will not trouble you with the detail of any of the operations of this campaign previous to the invasion.

vasion of the Prussians ; the removal of camps from Orchies to Maubeuge—the skirmishes at St. Amand, Bavay, and Mezieres.—These were only the amusements of the traitors on one side, and the sport of the Austrian generals on the other, to keep out of sight the grand operation which was then concerting between the French and German courts. Of the three generals employed on this occasion, Rochambeau retired early in disgust, with some pre-sentiment most likely of what was to follow. Luckner was far advanced in his second infancy, and easily imposed on. The game was altogether in the hands of La Fayette, whose military ignorance, his apologists would say, but whose treasons, which history will record, have been expiated by his present, and probably yet greater, misfortunes. After leaving the army, we directed our course along the Meuse to Montmedy, through that part of the country which lies between this river and the Dutchy of Luxembourg, in the Austrian territory. Verdun was left under the direction of a provisional administration, and a slight garrison. It contained a great number of Prussians, who were recommended to the care of the French by the Duke of Brunswick, and who were to be sent forwards when cured. The villages around were filled also with the sick, for whom no such provision was made, and who probably, when recovered, will serve in the French armies. The town, delivered from its apprehensions, had assumed its usual gaiety; the streets were beginning to be re-paved; the merchants were exposing their goods, all but the dealers in the chief manufactory of the town, the greater part of which the Prussians had bought when they took their leave, and the rest the Hessians had stolen. With-
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out troops to defend the neighbouring heights, which command the town on every side, it seems more strange that its defence should be undertaken, except as a temporary obstacle to the progress of the enemy, than that it should have surrendered so soon. It was, nevertheless, from the circumstances, cowardly surrendered; though one must form many apologies for its inhabitants, who, unaccustomed even to the noise of cannon, had begun to feel some of its fatal effects. We found the town divided in its patriotism, which might have been also the division of its courage; between the bishop, with the higher clergy, the bourgeois, and many of those who had elegant houses, on the one hand; and the inferior order of priests, the lower class, and the women, on the other. The indignation of the commander was not peculiar or fatal to himself alone. A young foldier, the son of a merchant at Troyes, overcome with shame when the Prussians entered the town, and unable to restrain his emotions, rushed forward from his ranks, and with his knife attempted to kill a general officer, whose looks of satisfaction had raised his despair into frenzy. He was instantly seized, and awaited an exemplary punishment in a prison made on the walls. He however deceived the senate, by precipitating himself into the river that flowed beneath; where he was drowned before any unwelcome assistance could have been afforded him. This sort of unjustifiable assassination had often been exercised on the invaders; and one of the complaints of the Prince de Ligne's letter, is the frequency of its commission by the peasants and national guards, who have generally more of the ardour, than of the wariness or discipline of soldiers. When the attack was made on Stonay, from which Dillon retreated, some of the inhabitants

tants imprudently continued the defence, by firing from the houses at the entrance of the town. One of those national guards was made prisoner, and he did not deny the charge, that he had fired two or three shot with the intention of killing the commander; though he was ignorant that the regular troops who defended the place had retreated. During the time that the Austrian and emigrant camp remained at Stenay, he was brought out on the parade at a certain hour every day, and underwent, with some severity, the military punishment of the scourge. The law of the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick was direct as to the crime and its atonement; and therefore this daily torture was certainly an infringement of the letter, as the expiation was only death. This conclusion to his sufferings he received the day preceding the departure of the army; there was no appeal, and on the part of the sufferer there was no murmur. For the sake of the example, the people were permitted to be present. He was ordered to confess his crime on his knees, and the justice of his sentence, which he refused, as he acknowledged neither. He then prepared himself for death, which, amidst the cries and lamentations of his friends, unrestrained by the presence of the Austrians, he underwent; declaring with his last breath that he fell a willing martyr to the liberties of his country, "*et quoique je meurs, Vive la Nation.*" Having been active in promoting a spirit of patriotism in his town and neighbourhood, he was much regretted by the inhabitants; among whom he has left a widow and three children, sufficiently provided for, not to expect any thing from the nation but its gratitude to the memory of their father. That he was imprudent, cannot be denied. That some examples

examples were necessary to check this irregular mode of attack, may be admitted; but the application of the law to every case, was not in the same spirit of justice. Of this misapplication, the little town or village of Voges was an instance. It was built on a mountain, which commanded the adjacent plain in every direction; and had probably been, at some period, a post of strength. It would have been folly in its inhabitants to have defended it against any considerable force: but as the advanced guard of armies are sometimes preceded in their march by robbers, whom a state of war sets loose from the ordinary restraints of society, they had determined to defend their village and their property, where resistance had the probability of being effectual. Accordingly, when a detachment from the advanced guard of the enemy appeared, it met with a severe repulse. They returned however soon with a considerable reinforcement, and renewed the attack. The national guard defended it with great valour as long as it was tenable; but, overpowered by numbers, they were obliged to surrender. This was a case which was not contained in the statutes of the manifesto. Here was no treachery, but an open and manly defiance. It was however agreed by the assailants, that, as the defence was not made according to the articles of war, and the defenders were not all clothed in uniform, that they were not entitled to the usual terms; though they did not deserve the extremest punishment. On the fate of these villagers they would not themselves decide, but dragged them away for judgment at the head quarters, tied to the tails of their horses. But, to leave some impression on their minds, and to serve as an example also to others, they made their prisoners set fire to

to their own houses, which certainly was an useless vengeance; and what had some aspect towards cruelty, was the hard-hearted contempt of the intreaties of a mother, who threw herself at the feet of the officers, praying them to spare her children: but the circumstances did not permit them to attend to the minute affections, and her infants perished in the flames.

One does not enquire into the right which the Duke of Brunswick had to issue this manifesto, as we have never yet heard any defence of his invasion: on the same grounds of moral rectitude, probably both must rest. But it would have become a mild and clement general, as he has commonly been esteemed, to have known the spirit of the executioners, before he intrusted to their discretion such sanguinary orders. He has said in his defence, and hinted it at the conference near Verdun, that these manifestoes were only "*expressions qui se jettent dans le peuple,*" which men of sense know how to appreciate; and reproached Dumourier, "*qu'il avoit pris la mouche pour quelques paroles insignifiantes.*" I am willing to believe, that, had he known the horrors which were to have been exercised under his sanction, he never could have brought his heart to have assented. But he remains almost without excuse, in not having examined more accurately into the instinctive dispositions of his allies, before he entrusted them with such commissions; and if he gives as an apology for his conduct, that which Burgoyne offered, when condemned for similar atrocities committed by the savages, his allies in the American war, "that he had rigorously enjoined them to abstinence from cruelty," we may answer him in this language of the general, as translated by Mr. Burke: "Go,
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ye gentle dragons, ye courteous lions, ye meek and dove-like tigers, ye innocent and tender wolves, ye soft and christian-hearted hyænas ! go, fight the battles of the great king, but shed no blood."

As the season had so far advanced before the Prussians took the field, the campaign would have been finished before Longwi and Verdun, had any kind of assistance been given to these towns. The valour of the defenders of Thionville held in check a long time a considerable force, and resisted it with effect. "You may desolate the fortress, and not leave one stone on another," Felix Wimpfen replied to the summons, "but you cannot burn the ramparts." Montmedy, where the king had intended to have held his court, had he succeeded in his escape, would have made the same noble resistance, if the patriotism of the municipality, which, from what I witnessed, was not impossible, had mounted only to the height of that of Verdun. This town was often menaced, the enemy having uninterrupted possession of the country around, especially after the retreat from Stenay, and the success of the Prussians in their march towards Clermont. The great force which it would require to make any impression, and the length of time necessary to reduce it, had made them abandon the enterprize ; for, independently of the strength of the works above ground and below, with which the enemy were well acquainted, its situation alone would have demanded another army to have forced it to surrender. This fortress is built on a hill, accessible but on one side, as the others rise nearly perpendicular : and the heights around are at so great a distance, that their possession to the enemy would be unavailing. Its lofty situation commands a fine view along the valley and the woods ; through which

which runs the river Chiars in a variety of romantic windings. On the other side are seen the bleak hills in the Austrian territory, within the distance of half a league. There is nothing in the town itself worthy of a royal residence, for it does not contain 200 houses; and the courtiers and aristocracy would have found some difficulty, had the plan of escape succeeded, to have met with accommodation. The retreat of the Austrians had just released the inhabitants from their confinement; and as no visitors or travellers had made their appearance in these regions since they had become the seat of war, we were examined more scrupulously. Our passports gained us ready entrance through the gates, and we underwent the military research without much difficulty. But the municipality were more ceremonious, and fearing that treason might lurk in some corner, and escape the accustomed observance, we were compelled to give an account of our parentage, birth, and education, as well as the evidence of our patriotism and friendship to the republic. After this inquisitorial research, and a variety of shrewd and sage remarks made by the municipal officers, one of whom was particularly minute in his enquiries where we meant next to bend our course, we were permitted to retire. After dinner, as there was nothing sufficiently interesting to detain us, we ordered post-horses to Stenay; when our cicerone entered, and advised us to take the road through Sedan. It was in vain that we represented to him that we did not wish to go to Sedan; that our route lay through the former place; and that to arrive at it through Sedan, would make a circuit of fifteen or twenty miles, and along the frontier, not yet sufficiently clear from the enemy. Besides, in going thither, we should meet with
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post-horses neither at La Ferté nor Carignan, villages we had to pass; and the delay would be extremely inconvenient. All these objections he combated with more warmth than one usually permits a friend in matters which are so personal; and as he continued to be pressing, I enquired the cause of the interest he took in our accommodation, and found that this magistrate was himself the post-master. This information unveiled the mystery of his solicitude. He cared little for our accommodation; but having been at the expence of keeping his horses for many a week untired, from the circumstances of the war, he thought the present a good opportunity of finding some compensation for his extraordinary expences, in obliging us to take them to see the environs of Montmedy. He agreed at length that the road to Stenay through Sedan was about three times as far as the direct one; that it would be impossible to get a relay of horses on the way; and that the night would close ere we reached the place of even his destination; but still it was clear to him that our best road must be that of Sedan. The motives of this municipal officer were so contemptible, that indignation would have been misplaced; I therefore laughed at him, making some reflections on the union of his two professions of magistrate and post-master, and concluded on going to Stenay. It was evident, however, that I had not conceived a sufficient idea of his importance or authority; for, on my return from a walk on the ramparts, I met my fellow-traveller, who, with looks of great dismay, informed me that we were put in a state of arrest. This the post-master magistrate himself confirmed: having had reason, since my departure from the house, to suspect us as disaffected, and that therefore he should order

order our detention till the arrival of the commander, which might probably be deferred a day or two, as he was gone to Longwi. In my absence he had terrified my companion, whose guilt, as a Prussian, had presented to his imagination a thousand modes of discovery, and whose fears of municipal punishment had terrified him into tones of submission. As I had no guilt of this sort, I had no fears, and therefore told this constituted protector of the rights of men, that I had hitherto taken him for a fool, and had only amused myself with his folly; that I now discovered he was a knave, and therefore felt the most inexpressible contempt both for himself and his menaces. As to our detention, he had better consult his brother officers: for my own part, I should, without any reluctance, await the return of the commander, whom I came to visit; and regretted only that I should be compelled to report, on my arrival at Paris, his conduct as a municipal officer, which was as dishonourable to the republic as it was disgraceful to himself. I did not await his answer, but took another walk, and found at my return our chaise at the door, with the post-master as obsequious as he had been before insolent. We drove out of the gates, with the persuasion, on my part, that I had lectured, or frightened him into virtue.—No such thing; my companion had agreed to pay him double the fare to Stenay: which iniquitous contract, not having previously received my assent, I hindered him the next morning from fulfilling. This tyrannical exaction was, in itself, of little importance. The chief impression made on my mind from the adventure, was the consideration of what must have been the feelings of Beaurepaire, when he was compelled to bend his high spirit to the dastardly decisions

decisions of such men as these, from whom, if honesty was so distant, heroism must be still more remote.

The whole country between Verdun and Rheims presented numberless traces of the outrages and devastations of war. Here we found the peasant lamenting the loss of his harvest, of which the enemy had despoiled him in their passage; there the owners of dismantled chateaus, returned to wander over the ruins of beautiful avenues and gardens most wantonly levelled; here the shepherd looking wistfully over the scanty remains of his flock, which the clemency of these invaders had spared him. At another place even this solicitude was rendered unnecessary, for all that the owner was possessed of had been plundered, he having received only bills on the royal treasury, an additional insult, in return. Bridges broken down, roads impassable, but at the rate of a league in two hours, were our habitual interruptions. Sometimes we had to make a passage for our carriage by the removal of the carcases of horses, and often to return from our walk not to tread on those of men, to which the speed of the enemy had only suffered them to perform half the rites, and which the charity or leisure of the peasant had not yet permitted him to finish. Of this kind of desolation the traces we met with would be deemed incredible. Many a league we passed where it was impossible to withdraw our view at every step from these instances of mortality; and in some places they were so frequent, that, unless means are taken by the departments to remedy this evil, if there be any, in breathing air thus saturated with putrescence, the effects may prove abundantly fatal. The triumphs even of liberty appear glorious but at a distance. Those who have the highest relish for the blessing,

bleffing, and prize it moft, muft have the love of it deeply rooted in their hearts not to fhudder at the meafures by which it is obtained. Rouffeau, in his declaration, that a revolution was too dear, if it coft but the life of one citizen, had never wandered over a field of battle, or his fenfibility, too exquisite to advife its acquifition by means fo ferocious, would have deftroyed, in its embryo, that fine offspring of his genius, which has nerved the arm of the republic in its greeneft infancy, to ftrangle the two dreadful ferpents of the North; and whose gigantic manhood will, with more than Herculean force, purge the world of the remaining monfters that infest it.

The country defcribed by the march of the Pruffian column prefented paradifaical profpects compared with that of the Auftrians and the emigrants. I fhould slack your belief were I to recount to you all its horrors. Some circumftances of it have made impreffions on my mind, which will never be removed; and I am convinced that if princes, and the minions or minifters of princes, could be compelled to feel and view bodily the miferies they create, this great fcourge of the human race muft have a speedy termination. The great order which reigned amongft the Pruffians, and their rigid difcipline, had preferved them from the variety of wretchednefs which prevailed in the other army, whose luxury and oftentation, when they went forth to conquer, efpecially thofe of the emigrant nobleffe, could be equalled only by the mifery and defpair that overwhelmed them in their flight. Where the principle of honour was too ftedfaft, even amidft thefe extreme misfortunes, to prevent them from ftooping to the bafenefs of robbery, they were compelled to fell their horfes, and even their arms,

arms, to procure themselves the means of subsistence ; whilst those who had little else at the outset but that honour, and the friendship of the emigrant princes to rely on, presented spectacles that would have moved the heart of the sternest republican to commiseration. General descriptions interest us but little. The Roman rhetorician has observed, that a city taken by storm, or an army slaughtered, leave little effect on the mind, whilst we melt into tears at the minute distress of infant innocence, and start up with horror at the shrieks of violated modesty. Many instances of individual misery we beheld in our journey, with the detail of which I would not distress you : but one was connected with an affair of our own, and you must excuse the egotism of the adventures of the first, to hear the sad history of the other. We had travelled a melancholy day along roads strewed with the wrecks of men and horses, and in a country which, from its desolate and uninteresting appearance, contributed rather to render the scene more gloomy. The night was approaching when we came in sight of a lofty mountain at the distance of a league, which we were to traverse, if we meant to continue our journey, from which our guide endeavoured to persuade us, by the assurance that every step we advanced farther would be more hazardous than the last, on account of the badness of the roads and the swell of the waters ; besides other dangers which we might undergo from the immediate circumstances of the country, and the unprotected state in which every thing was around us. The last beams of the setting sun had for a moment gilded the top of the hill, and discovered to us a village, which had the appearance of being fortified, with a monastery and castle towering above the
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the rest, the last of which seemed, as we drew nearer, to be only an extensive mass of ruins. The country around it was covered with woods; and so far as the dim light would permit us to discover, the country before us wore a pleasant contrast with that through which we were then labouring. Independently of our wish to view more accurately a place which appeared so romantic, and the prospect it would afford, the evening had closed, and, as our conductor had informed us, we found the difficulty of the road increased as we approached. We resolved, therefore, to profit by his advice, to take possession of the first house that offered, and await the return of morning. There was no inn nearer than the town; but we were informed, that we might procure accommodation at a house at some trifling distance, to which our conductor led us. The mistress of this mansion received us with great courtesy, and offered us all the accommodation which her house, under the circumstances of the late visitation, could afford. Her welcome of ourselves, and her invectives against the emigrants were uttered with great volubility; but the same pillage, and the same complaint were so common, that they passed at length unnoticed by us. Her misfortunes, however, were not so extensive as to hinder her from giving us a very pleasant reception. The best bed-room was arranged for us, and the best supper provided; both which, though in no very high style of comfort, to us hungry and dis-jointed were epicurean; while the storm that was howling without, and which had been gathering for some time, gave no more than common conviction of our own happiness in having found such an asylum. Our hostess without invitation joined us in our repast, during which she gave us her history

tory of the campaign, so far as her own observations or experience went; and related a variety of anecdote, in which was mingled a considerable quantity of local adventure, which, though it would serve very well to swell the volume of village memoirs, would make no considerable figure in general history. When we had exhausted our store of communication, we took leave of each other; and, after every one else had retired, and nothing was heard but the pelting of the rain, which seemed descending in torrents, and blasts of wind mixed with thunder, to which the hoarse sound of falling waters at a slight distance was a continued accompaniment, I sat down to write for an hour, having but little inclination to sleep. It was past midnight when I arose to fasten my door; but found to it neither bolt nor lock. I should have paid but little attention to this circumstance at any other time, having travelled for some years in France without feeling any cause for apprehension; but our local situation gave me a momentary uneasiness. Seeing a light through the crevice of a door, at the end of a gallery, and supposing it to be that of the servant of the house, from whom I might procure some means of securing our apartment, I went thither, and on my approach was struck with the sound of voices speaking in loud whispers, as if fearful of being overheard. Curiosity led me to listen, when I found them conversing on the route they should pursue in the morning, which they seemed to discuss with some warmth. A variety of oaths mingled in this conversation, all of which, from the jargon they spoke, I could not well understand; but that which I half comprehended appeared to me alarming and frightful. At length I heard a woman, who was approaching the door where I stood, say distinctly,

“ that she was obliged to stab him twice before she could kill him; that he begged earnestly for his life; and that something which he wore, but which I did not well understand, had rendered it difficult to dispatch him.” The answer to this I could not distinctly hear, but it appeared to convey some remark on the deed with a reference to another murder. I knelt down, and looked through the crevice from which the light proceeded, and my alarm was not a little heightened, when I saw displayed on the table shirts and waistcoats torn and bloody, which the woman was examining during this conversation. I listened still, and was confirmed beyond all possibility of doubt, from the continuance of their discourse, that it was a troop of murderers, of unexampled audacity in the commission of their crimes, as they carried about with them the most unequivocal marks of their guilt, and were so little careful in the concealment: but what appeared to me strange was, that, during the space of near half an hour, no word escaped them, by which I could conjecture that they meant to take, as I had no doubt they would, our lives and property under their protection. Concluding, however, that this had been before discussed and settled, I withdrew to my chamber to consider what conduct we had best pursue in a situation so extremely critical. I recollected seeing on our entrance four men and a woman in one part of the kitchen, at the fire of which I staid for a few minutes to warm myself; and, though lately accustomed to see strange figures, I could not help observing, that there was something singularly ferocious in their visages, particularly in that of the woman whose haggard look discovered symptoms, as I then thought, of intoxication, and whose handkerchief was stained in two or three places with blood. I remarked also, that they

they considered us and our baggage with more than usual attention as we passed, and seemed cautiously silent whilst we remained near them. Recovering from the surprize into which this discovery had thrown me, I had resolved on finding the mistress of the house; but it struck me that she might be more acquainted with the profession of her guests than she ought; and that an application to her at that moment would only increase the danger. What led me to form this opinion was her excessive courtesy, which I was not at this moment sufficiently candid to set down to any other account than that of finding the readier means of betraying us. I was confirmed in this conjecture, when I descended softly into the kitchen, and found the key taken from the door, which was doubly locked. I returned again into my chamber, and opened the shutters and the casement; but, from the pitchy darkness, could form no opinion of the height from the ground, which I fancied to be considerable; and it would have been difficult also to have wrested the bars, as we had no weapon of sufficient strength. I deliberated another moment; and the recollection of a thousand frightful stories only served to increase my apprehensions. Again I crept to the door of these murderers; but all now was silence. I retreated again to my chamber; and, after having reflected that there were no means of resistance, or hopes of escape, I determined on demanding from the hostess what she knew of her inmates, and acquainting her with my own discoveries. A moment of returning virtue assured me, that I had accused her unjustly; and I began to flatter myself, that cruelty and death could not lurk under a form which we had found so engaging: for, though she had been a widow for some years (as she gave us a long detail

of her own history), she was still young and beautiful. Leaving, therefore, my companion asleep, and whom I did not wish to awaken, because I knew that he could afford, by his advice, no means which I had not previously pursued, and his terrors could only have increased my own, I put off my boots, and stalked along to a flight of stairs at the end of the passage, to which I had attended her when she left us. This led me to another passage; and I had flattered myself that I had found her chamber, when the wind through a broken casement extinguished my candle, and left me in profound darkness. I groped around, but could not find the door, but I found the window, and opened it. A flash of lightning at the instant discovered the impossibility of reaching the ground unhurt; and the storm was still increasing. I leaned on the window for a few minutes; the village clock struck one; and its nearness gave me some little comfort, though I found that the wind had favoured the sound. The lightning became more frequent, and its glare directed me to the door I sought. Listening at it, I heard nothing but deep sighs, which appeared to proceed from some one who was suffering: I attempted to open it, when a man's voice convinced me that I had mistaken the room. I groped my way back with difficulty, passing still before this dreadful den, where I could hear nothing but the hard-drawn breath of those who slept, which gave me farther assurance. As I approached my chamber, my fears led me to imagine that it had been visited. I saw, indeed, no light, but, listening for a moment, I heard distinctly the footsteps as of a person without shoes: it was not my fellow-traveller, for I heard him breathe. I took out my knife, and grasped the candlestick; for a small pistol

tol I had in my pocket was useless from being unloaded. It appeared to me as if the person had concealed himself; for I heard no farther motion, and a transient view across the room, from the light of the embers, which discovered nothing, seemed to favour my conjecture. I leaned against the wall, and could proceed no farther, for my agitation almost overcame me. All the horror of our situation rushed on my mind—in a frontier country, professedly under no law but that of force, and alternately in the power of enemies, and friends as savage often as enemies—in a solitary house, where every thing was terrific—with murderers at my door, and even, as I apprehended, in my chamber—with no means of defence against the expected attempt, and no hopes left of escaping it, I gave ourselves up for lost, and was resolved to await the event without any farther exertion. I remained in this state of despair for a few minutes, when I resolved on awakening my fellow-traveller, and called to him from the door of the chamber, which I had not yet entered. He was too wearied to be awakened; but the object of my immediate terror leaped from the opposite bed, and came towards me: it happily proved to be the house-dog, who, finding that I had left the door open in my descent to the kitchen, had taken possession of my bed. I found some protection in his company; and, after kissing him, relighted my candle, and went again in search of the mistress, whose chamber, in my first attempt, I had passed, not observing a little passage on my right which led to it. I advanced, and, conjecturing that I had been successful, lifted up the latch softly, and entered. She was in a profound sleep, which I took for a good omen, and sat down by her bed-side, deliberating whether I should awake her. The glare of the light, which
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I held close to her face, to examine, whilst she had not the power of dissimulation, whether it was that of a murderer, of which, after minute observance, I could not find a trace, awoke her. She started, and, I believe, for some moments attributed my visit to very different motives from those which brought me thither. I favoured her mistake, though so injurious to my loyalty, till I found that I might safely communicate to her all my apprehensions; and you may judge of the relief I obtained, when she informed me, that, though the objects of my suspicions were occasional murderers, yet we were not the game they pursued. They were, she said, a party of ruffians, who follow armies to plunder the dead; and who, paying tribute to those whose office it is to bury the slain, often put to death the wounded to have a legal claim on what they possess. The booty which the woman had exhibited, when she mentioned the murder which caught my ear, was taken from an Austrian officer whom she killed; and I found that the dispute which I had attended to arose from a difference of opinion, whether their route should be in the direction of the army of Flanders, from which they hoped a more profitable harvest, or that to which they at present belonged. She had requested them to quit her house, where they had been loitering the greatest part of the day; but the storm, that had come on at the close of the evening, had prevented their departure; and therefore she had been obliged to suffer them to take up their abode, having no means of resistance, in the room adjoining to ours. As she had no fears herself, she did not think it necessary, she observed, to give us any alarm; but added, that, as I seemed yet to retain my

my apprehensions, she would instantly dress herself, and arrange a bed for me in her own room, whilst my fellow-traveller might have the same accommodation in that of a young emigrant officer, whose chamber was at the end of the passage, and whom these suspected murderers had brought in with them some days since sick and wounded; and whose life they had spared, though he was thoroughly plundered. I visited him in the morning, and found in the room I had mistaken during the night, an interesting and well informed young man, who was the son of a nobleman in one of the southern provinces; and who had followed, with reluctance, his father and elder brother to join the army of the Emigrant princes. He had remonstrated against this expedition with his friends, till they had set down his refusal to motives injurious to his honour, and he had at length yielded to their persuasions in opposition to his principles and conscience. He had lost his brother early in the campaign, and had kept back from the army to attend the last moments of his father, who had lately died at a village a few leagues distant. Overcome by fatigue, as he was pursuing his course across the frontiers to join his other friends, he had thrown himself down at the foot of some trees in the neighbouring woods, and was awakened from a sleep into which he had insensibly fallen, by the imprecations of several ruffians, whose knives were presented to his throat. They spared his life, after much entreaty, but robbed him of his watch, and all that he had about him, except a few louis d'ors, which he had previously concealed in his boot, and which he had but just before gained from the sale of his horse. He had received a wound in his thigh, which had brought on a fever, now so encreased, that, notwithstanding the skill of the village surgeon, and the kindness of his attendants,

ants, it would soon, he felt, leave him not long to lament the loss of his relations. He had left his mother and one sister in Germany, whose fate gave him more pain than even the loss of his other friends, as they had been too successful in persuading him to this enterprise; and he trembled for their lives when they should hear that their husband and brothers were no more, the cause of whose ruin they had unhappily been so earnest to promote. To comfort them amidst this wreck of their fortunes and hopes, if heaven spared his life, now forfeited and in the power of his country if he should be discovered, he was hastening—but what should he carry them back?—The tears that trickled down his cheeks, and the agitation of his mind, hindered him from proceeding farther.—And this, with some variation, is the history of thousands, who, with every abhorrence that a friend to liberty feels at their conspiracy against it, are loud claimants on our compassion; for their unexampled misfortunes are plenary expiations of their crimes.

With the history of these individual miseries, I could fill many a page. For all the evils that poverty, disease, and wretchedness can inflict, most of these emigrants suffer; and with heavy curses deplore the day, when, listening to the counsels of chiefs and friends, they abandoned their country to fight against her. When taken prisoners, the law punishes them with instant death, as rebels; and, what is singular, the Duke of Brunswick has insisted on no terms for their exemption. Twelve of these unhappy young men were sent up to Paris to be executed; but this legal murder the generals do not countenance, as they afford them, except in certain instances, the ready means of escape.

The

The last post we occupied before our arrival here was the head quarters near the pass of Croix au Bois. At a chateau but a little distance, Monsieur the King's brother first began to exercise the prerogatives of royalty, as the Lieutenant of his Majesty. The assembled emigrant noblesse had invested him with full powers; and he had, in virtue of the appointment, constituted governors and commandants of the towns and provinces which they had conquered. The enjoyment of their new posts was not of long duration, and the little jealousies that were breaking out from dissatisfaction at undeserved preferences were put an end to with the authority that had given them. The pleasures of ambition are commonly fleeting. The course of those was extremely transient; for the 20th of September shook them to their foundation; and the retreat of the Prussians crumbled them to dust. A slight reinforcement to the French would have made this post more tenable: they succeeded in the first attack, when the Prince de Ligne was killed, but were compelled to yield to superior force.

From all the information I could procure from the people of the post-house, where he held his last quarters, and who were intelligent enough to have made the remark, he was in that disposition of mind the evening preceding his death to have written so despairing a letter. As the field of battle was in possession of the French half an hour, it was probable that the letter in question was found, as his body was brought home completely stripped, part of which was buried in the adjoining church-yard, and the rest carried back to Germany. From this village of Bain, after having passed through Buzancy, we proceeded through Vereziere and Rethel

to Rhelms; and when we have paid our devotions at the shrine of this sacred relick of royalty, the holy flask, we shall proceed on our journey to Paris.

Adieu.

LETTER VI.

Lisle, December 12,
1792

I HAD intended to have written you my next letter from England, but these unexpected events have detained me—We left our patriotic and interesting emigrées at Tournay early this morning, and have been spending the rest of the day in viewing the various places of action between that town and Lisle, which have been so frequent during the campaign, that scarcely a village or a wood, if they were all to be celebrated, “would rear its head unsung.” It was here, if you remember, that the French met with their first defeat, or rather dishonour, if any dishonour can attach to the nation from the acts of traitors, whose views and interest being directed to the subversion of the cause they pretended to defend, the nefarious deeds committed by them must be set down only to their own account, or that of those who employed them. On our approach towards Lisle, the desolation made by the tremendous siege the city had undergone, discovered itself first in the wrecks of trees and a village

which

which stood on that side where the enemy had erected its works, and from which it found considerable shelter, before it was dislodged by the balls from the town itself.

The heroic resistance of the inhabitants and a small garrison, to one of the most formidable attacks that was perhaps ever made, will deserve a very distinguished place in history. All the knowledge that military ingenuity could furnish, and all the force that could be brought to act with effect in the manner the siege was conducted, have been tried in vain. The works erected by the assailants were immense and formidable, beyond any example, if you will credit the report of the engineers who have visited them, though I make every allowance for the assertions of a Frenchman, when the national honour is concerned.

The reduction of this city was held to be so important that no expence was spared to effect it. I shall not enter into any military description of this siege, nor tell you how the entrenchments were formed in two lines, beginning from the village of Kellemenes, and stretching along to the suburbs of Fives; nor how the batteries were placed at a hundred paces from each other; because descriptions of this sort afford little information, and, without charts to accompany them, are altogether useless. The Austrians opened on the town the 29th of September, and continued their fire without intermission day and night for the space of a week. The quarter to which they chiefly directed it was that which was inhabited by citizens of the lower class, for which there were two reasons; first, had the fire been indiscriminate, the houses of the aristocracy, the friends of the besiegers, would have shared the same fate, or rather, from their greater extent,

extent, a severer than the rest: the other was the hope that the poorer class, seeing their little all delivered up to the flames, and being supposed to have a greater feeling for property than sense of patriotism, would revolt, and cause the garrison and municipality to open the gates and deliver up the town. They were disappointed in their expectations. These brave patriots caused the keys of the city to be carried into the great square, and hung them on the tree of liberty, passing a decree, that whoever took them down for the purpose of opening the gates to the enemy, should be punished with instant death. The fire was very terrific, and the inhabitants not being accustomed to such visitants as red-hot balls, were at first unprepared for their reception. They soon however collected courage, and organised themselves into bodies, each of which had its separate functions. They had not taken the precaution of unpaving the streets, but they brought down from their store rooms, at the tops of their houses, which in France is the usual repository, hay and straw, and strewed it in the streets, so that, whilst there was so much less fuel for the fire which the balls in falling kindled, it served in some measure to prevent the usual effect of the bombs on the pavement. One party was employed in carrying water to the doors of every house, another was appointed, at given distances, to watch the direction of those balls, and give signals, which others observing, ran to the house where the shot had fallen, to take them out and extinguish the flames; whilst a few amused themselves in running after the bombs, and taking out the fuses to prevent the explosion; and, if you will believe the reporters, this was sometimes the occupation of the children, who, in crying *Vive la Nation*, which

which they believed to have the force of a charm, had soon lost the sense of danger. All these operations were made without the slightest confusion, and generally in singing the patriotic airs.

The instances of individual courage were very frequent, and indeed from the arrangement made, there could be few cowards. One man who was serving the artillery, being told that his house was just set on fire, answered coolly, that he could not quit his post, but that he should stay to return the compliment. The curé of Marchiennes, when a cannon ball entered the apartment where the electoral assembly were sitting, and struck on the wall, observed, that as they were then permanent, he should move, that the ball should be decreed permanent also; which having been unanimously voted, it remains there over the chair of the president, in place of the royal arms and fleur de lys, which occupied that space before. These monuments are thickly sown on the walls of the houses, the inhabitants having had them plaistered in as so many trophies. You may well imagine the effect which fifty or sixty thousand red-hot balls and bombs must have in a city so populous as Lille, and in the quarter where the fire was directed. This quarter is one vast and undistinguished heap of ruins. Of several streets, or those passages which they told us formerly were streets, we found only one inhabitant, a poor old woman, whose fortress had held out the fury of the siege, and who had not quitted her post amidst the general wreck. It was proof indeed against balls or bombs, being two or three fathoms under ground; and here we found her undisturbed, though full of lamentations for the loss of her neighbourhood. The common danger had levelled all distinctions—a family whose dwelling had been destroyed,

destroyed, without ceremony became incorporated with another, and the exchange to the poorer class was in general for the better, as they found very comfortable accommodations, and pretty safe protection in that quarter where the aristocracy heretofore resided, of whose houses they took possession, as the enemy were careful in not destroying the property of their allies. The church of St. Stephen, a noble edifice, was burnt the first night of the bombardment, together with the range of shops around it; and a number of other houses, to the amount of two thousand, were set on fire and otherwise damaged, but the quarter of St. Sauveur, as I have observed, is literally a heap of rubbish. The garrison was too small to produce any effect by sallies. They therefore confined themselves to answering the fire from the ramparts, on which, for seven days and nights, they slept, or rather were in permanence, for no one could possibly sleep from the continued thunder, and the constant sense of danger, uncertain for one moment whether the next would not bring him one of those messengers which would close his eyes for ever! As this siege was made according to the usual rules, the exhibition was very brilliant. It drew a number of the curious to behold the spectacle, amongst whom was the Archduchess and her court, who diverted themselves with beholding the effects produced by the various kinds of artillery; an assortment of each of which, for her amusement, was discharged in her presence. She had the courage, it is asserted, to fire some of these tremendous machines herself; but her curiosity proved fatal to some of the engineers, who, willing to shew the extent of their art, charged two mortars with bombs of the largest size, which unhappily burst and killed thirty-

thirty-five men that were round the battery. The loss of the garrison was very inconsiderable, and that of the people was not very great, amounting in the whole to about five hundred, four parts of which were women and children. The loss of the enemy amounted to nearly two thousand; but this is uncertain, as they could only suffer from bombs thrown into their entrenchments, and it required much skill and adroitness to do this with any effect; but the French are noted marksmen, and it is the superiority of their artillery which has given them so much success.

When the fire had ceased, which for eight days had not left but at one time an interval of a few minutes, and the fear of immediate danger was removed, the visits of the unfortunate sufferers, wandering amongst the ruins of their former dwellings, the wrecks of their furniture, and the ashes of their merchandize, over the remains of their relations and friends buried in the mass, lamenting their fate, but crying out "Vive la Nation, vive la Republique!" was a spectacle infinitely affecting. These men had been represented to the Austrians, by the aristocracy, as traitors, easily corrupted, or cowards, readily scared, neither of which they have proved. On the contrary, these invaders have felt what freemen can do, both here, at Gemmappe, and at St. Menchould, when they are called on in extreme circumstances, either to act or suffer. The nation will be too just not to reward these brave men for what they have suffered here; for it cannot leave those to perish who, by their courage, virtue, and love of their country, have exposed their property and lives to such horrors. The supposition would be injurious, did we not know that republics are seldom grateful; this is however a debt beyond

beyond gratitude ; it is a substantial claim on justice. Had they not thus resisted, Lille must have fallen ; and if Lille had fallen, little hopes were to be entertained that other towns of less strength would have stood the proof of red-hot balls and bombs, which produce so terrible an effect. This bold resistance, deceiving all the expectations of the enemy, has entirely removed the theatre of war from the territories of the republic, where danger was to have been apprehended from other enemies than the invaders : but by carrying it into their own, if the inhabitants have that desire for freedom which their ill-managed revolutions of late do not indeed seem to indicate, they will take advantage of the opportunity which gives them so powerful an ally to support their pretensions. For French liberty, however, I do not think that the Belgians are prepared. Their personal attachment to their priests, and their superstitious adherence to the religion of their forefathers, because it is the religion of their forefathers, a reason given always to apologize for ignorance, and to crush enquiry, will form obstacles of no small difficulty to the spreading of liberty either civil or religious amongst them. I do not wish to compound with error that is mischievous, or yield to prejudices that prevent the progress of knowledge ; but this general eracination, which I fear the French will endeavour to enforce, will not be tolerated here ; for with the tares the wheat must be torn up also. As yet, however, the French have been received with joy as friends, and hailed with gratulation as deliverers. If they are wise they will not take too much advantage of this gratitude, too faithless a foundation in the multitude to build much upon, but will show, by their forbearance and moderation, that they deserve liberty themselves,

selves, whilst they are willing to extend it to others; not by forcing on every country they enter, every principle which the mature soil of France has brought to imaginary perfection, and which it believes to be essential to the possession of entire freedom; but by leaving others to the choice of those principles, and the application of such as will suit their peculiar circumstances; and if these are sufficient for the enjoyment of as much liberty as gives the most practical means of happiness, the whole end of all good government is fully answered. This is no apology for despotism in any of its forms: it is an expression only of my wishes, that the French, in entering a country, the manners of which are different from their own, would consider the necessary discordance of Belgian habits and French principles, and how fatal it will be to the interests of both to persist, as I fear they will, in persecuting their new allies with theories of which they themselves do not know the result, and of which they have not yet felt the benefit. As yet, it is impossible to form any just opinion of the reception those principles will meet with, or how the system of fraternization, begun in Savoy, will be welcomed here. If the same motives influence the will of the Belgians at present, as directed their actions in the last revolution they attempted, France, and Brabant, happily for both, will remain two distinct states: for if the priests and nobles, according to the French system, are precluded the exertion of their influence, the primary assemblies, about to be called, may vote the union; but a civil war, without great precaution, will be the consequence. The people, however, are too much occupied at this moment about their immediate existence, and the means of continuing it,

it, to enter into any analysis of government. If France is determined therefore to fraternize here, she will take advantage of the indecision of the people, and fix their destiny to her own; but she must take care that no ill conduct, on her part, shall excite the spirit of enquiry into the stratagem, or the course of popular favour will turn against the deceit. These observations will not please our fraternizing friends, the citizens ——— of ——— who talk so rapturously of realizing the beatific visions of the Abbé St. Pierre. But the truth is, that though the French may not be going too far, they seem to be going too fast, and the stubborn habits of this generation must pass away, which they scarcely will, but with the generation itself, before these great principles of liberty and human happiness give all the benefit to be expected from them, on the soil even where they are sprung.

Our journey into Brabant, or rather the emigration hither of the party we attended, was highly agreeable and interesting in more views than those I have related. We made but little delay till we arrived near the frontiers, passing a few hours at Peronne, where we arrived very late, and which we left very early, and remaining a short space at Cambray and Valenciennes, where we fell in with the route of Dumourier in his march towards Brussels, when he left the plains of Chalons, the Ultima Thule of the Duke of Brunswick. Nothing of any importance occurred to Dumourier till he had passed Valenciennes, beyond which the enemy had posted themselves to prevent his farther progress. During the march of this army from St. Menchould hither, Custine's had taken possession of Spire, Worms, and the other towns on the Rhine, and was proceeding to Mentz and Frankfurt;

fort; whilst the general on the side of the Alps had entered Savoy, the inhabitants of which received them joyfully; and Nice, with her dependencies, had yielded to the arms of the republic in the same disposition of fraternity. Dumourier had promised to winter in Brussels, and, in imitation of the Duke of Brunswick, sent forward his manifesto, declaratory of his intentions in the invasion. There was nothing common in these two manifestoes but the name. He informs them, that under the influence of the late government of France, they had received no assistance but such as the perfidy of the court lent for the purpose of betraying: that it was necessary for the success of liberty, that this perfidious despotism should be crushed, and royalty itself abolished, to give all its energy to this sacred cause, and inspire a perfect confidence in the French republic, and in the armies sent to their assistance:—that, on entering their country, they meant only to assist them in planting the tree of liberty, without touching in one single point the fabric of the constitution they should think fit to rear, provided this constitution were the free and unbiassed choice of the people; and if they would, as a measure of common safety, withdraw themselves from the yoke they had so long groaned under, the French would become their brethren, their friends, and allies: that their property and laws should, in the minutest points, be treated with the greatest respect, and that the French armies should be models of discipline amongst them. These prospects and promises were so fair and flattering, that it is not wonderful that a people, who have so long and so often struggled for their liberty, should listen with joy to this harbinger of good tidings. Dumourier had then to realize what he promised, and he has in part performed it.

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The battle of Gemmappe will be long remembered, not more for the obstinate valour with which it was fought, than its being the probable means of securing to the Belgians their liberty and independence. The Austrians having abandoned Lisle, had drawn up their forces to this point to oppose Dumourier's passage, and many skirmishes of little note, except one which passed at Bouffu, a league from Gemmappe, led on this memorable day. At the village of Bouffu the Austrians lost about six hundred men, and the bravery with which they disputed the ground, gave the French some pre-sentiment of what they had to contend with before they made good their engagement of wintering in Brussels. The post of Bouffu was nevertheless forced, and so unexpected was the success, or even the attack, on the part of the Austrians, that a large party of the officers had prepared a magnificent supper for the entertainment of some newly-arrived friends, which was just ready on the arrival of the French, who took possession of it as a part of the spoil.

On the 5th of November, Dumourier came in full view of the enemy, posted on the heights of Gemmappe. This is a small village about a mile and a half from the town of Mons, of no importance but as it furnished a name to this event. The position of the enemy was highly favourable: their right was protected by this village, and the river which had overflowed the adjoining plain; and their left by woods, between which, and the range in front, were constructed three rows of redoubts, furnished with nearly one hundred pieces of artillery of various descriptions. If the French had confined themselves to their cannon, as they did at the affair of La Lune, they would have fought to a considerable

ble disadvantage, from the superior position of the enemy. But the soldiers were anxious to come to closer quarters; and the generals commanding the various divisions solicited Dumourier to lead them on to the attack. Dumourier, who partook of their ardour, repressed it for a moment, to excite it the more: but at length gave orders to storm the works at noon. The necessary dispositions were made for this effect. Gemmappe was carried by Bournonville, on the right: the village of Carignan, at the bottom of the hill, was taken in front; the enemy were dislodged from the woods on the left: the important crisis was drawing near—Dumourier, whose knowledge of the human mind, and the various circumstances that influence it, is not less than his military skill, presented himself in the front of the line, and taking off his coat and waistcoat, at the same instant by a signal, ordered the music, which had been hitherto silent, to strike up the Marseillois song. The day was remarkably serene, so that the music was every where distinctly heard, and the more so as the firing had ceased on the side of the French, and the only accompaniment was the thunder of the enemy. The line of redoubts being formed amphitheatrically, the troops were arranged in this form also, so that every soldier had the means of viewing the general, and became more animated every instant. This was the decisive moment—the troops, raised to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, regardless of the murderous fire kept up against them from the redoubts, crying out, “Vive la Nation!” and joining in the chorus of this celebrated song, rushed forward with wonderful rapidity, and took possession of the first redoubts. The cavalry of the enemy, charging on the flanks, threw the columns into some confusion, and they were repelled with difficulty,

difficulty, during which the second line of redoubts was carried; when the Austrians, seeing the ardour and resolution of the French troops, became panic-struck, and yielded the third without much resistance. This terror, though it was pretty general, operated differently—the Austrians fled, but some of the works, filled with Hungarian troops, were gained only when every soldier had fallen. The loss of the enemy Dumourier computed at four or five thousand; that of the French at nine hundred, both killed and wounded. The numbers I have reason to believe were more equal. For the time it lasted, never was a battle more obstinately fought, or a more signal victory, considering all its circumstances, obtained. Since then the Austrians have had but little inclination to dispute the conquest of Brabant; for the little skirmishes that have taken place on entering Brussels can scarcely be called an opposition. It has destroyed also assertions which had been made, that French courage was not equal to any enterprize where the danger was very imminent; for here there was not a soldier that did not partake personally of the business of the day; and feats were performed not surpassed in any history. General Egalité, who has been in our party from Paris, who has walked over the ground with us, and fought again the battle, was one who contributed most signally to its success. Dumourier had praised him cautiously to the Convention: but I should have spoken of him as he deserved, and praised him more, says he, in a private letter to one of my friends, had he not been a prince.

Dumourier's valet de chambre rallied and brought up to the charge a regiment of dragoons, and two battalions of national guards, and Bretoche, a lieutenant

tenant in the national gendarmerie, retired only when he had killed seven men, and received forty-one wounds with sabres*. One of these heroes we found at Bouffu almost covered with wounds, but whose loss of blood had not at all diminished the vigour of his patriotism.—Dumourier summoned the town to surrender: the next day the magistrates sent him the keys, which he returned, and the people received the French as brothers. From Mons he proceeded forwards, through Brussels, to Liege, and if he be properly supported, no enemy will appear on this side of the Rhine before the close of the winter. That this support will be given him appears very problematical, if one may judge from the spirit of rancour and undue severity which is now agitating Paris against the king, in the discussion of whose fate the Convention will lose sight of the more important fate of the country, and spend those precious moments in which they should prepare for the future, in unnecessary invectives against the abuses of the past. If any credit is to be given to the report, the army is diminishing daily; not only from the return of the volunteers to their homes, but from the extreme distress to which it is reduced. I have just seen a letter from the commissaries, which confirms this account: it states, that in their visit to the camp, though they beheld the soldiers full of courage, and expressing their wishes to be led on to farther conquests; they could not regard, without the highest indignation, the destitute condition to which these brave men are reduced. Their coats,

* This has much the air of romance. Bournonville, however, presented this hero at the bar of the Convention—where his wounds were numbered, his services recorded, and his patriotism rewarded by a civic crown, bestowed by the president!—He is since gone back to fight again the battles of his country.

coats, they say, are nothing but pieces of cloth badly sown together; the greatest part have neither shirts nor waistcoats; they have no cloaks to cover their firelocks when it rains, and in this wretched state, they are doomed to resist, as well as they can, the rigours of the winter. Of the sick the condition seems to be worse. These poor wretches have neither mattresses nor coverlets, and are obliged to remain stretched on the boards, with a scanty portion of straw only. This neglect, after a campaign so extremely fatiguing, is highly criminal: I cannot even divine the cause*. The commissaries observe, that they have not yet discovered it; and add, that Dumourier complains of the manner in which the minister of war corresponds with him; acquainting them that all the letters which he receives from the various generals in his army are filled with the same histories of their sufferings and their wants. This disorganization may be yet repaired, and this excess of evil still remedied. But there must be more vigilance and better dispositions than appear at present, either in the minister or the Convention; in the office of the first of which, I am told there is more venality and intrigue, than ever existed in any bureau under the old regime; and in the latter, violence and party are domineering over every project that has for its object the tranquillity or safety of the republic. This state of things however cannot last long. If it unhappily should, farewell to all those delightful visions, which we have been lately accustomed to flatter ourselves as realized, whilst the rights of man, after their progress towards a firm establishment, by the opinions of philosophers, the
swords

* See the notes at the end.

swords of freemen, and the fiat of an enlightened people, 'prove themselves fitted only for subjects of sophistic contention, to noisy and turbulent disputants, or become in reality those "paltry blurred shreds of paper," denounced with prophetic fury by the indignant, but hitherto disregarded declaimer. If this state of ferocious anarchy continue much longer within, and no more attention be paid to the condition of their protectors, the armies without, the Convention will cry in vain to surrounding nations, "Be free:" for it will be answered, that if such are the blessings of liberty; if with all these fancied assurances of social order and public happiness, nothing but evils present themselves now, and clouds and thick darkness hang on the future; we had rather bear the pains of despotism, of which we can appreciate the measure, than fly for refuge to a state of political existence over which even despotism has many advantages. This, indeed, is the language of men who have much less relish for freedom, than selfish concern for their own personal repose. But such will also be the language of men who look, as most do, little farther than the present moment; though the history of former times instructs us, how superior is that state of society in which civil broils for political rights continually disturb the state, and which, nevertheless, is flourishing in arts, enriched by philosophy, and great in population, to that of despotism, which can boast of its order only when it makes a solitude, and which it then dignifies with the name of peace. For superior surely was Greece, even when the assassinations of tyrants was the Marsellois song of the people, and the avowed corruption of its constituted protectors awoke the thunder of Demosthenes; to Greece of the present hour, the tranquil

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province of an ignorant barbarian, and the peaceful habitation of slaves : and greater surely was Rome, even when agitated by the contentions of the heated multitude, torn by factions, diminished by civil wars, and horrid proscriptions, compared with present Rome, the seat of priestly government and sacerdotal protection ; of the scanty inhabitants of whose wasted domains, the poverty and superstition have become proverbial. France, however, is too enlightened to dread a similar fate, though she may have long to contend with numerous evils. Infested as she is by traitors within, and menaced by a host of foes from without, she will yet be suspicious ; and of suspicion ferocity is the constant attendant. It cannot be expected that a nation, the safety of which has depended on the entire infraction of the laws, will at once be very observant of any ; and if this temporary violation of order be not reduced into a system, we must not complain, that the genius of liberty, in rushing forwards to strike at the formidable hosts of its external foes, should crush, with unrelenting step, the pigmies of aristocracy or despotism which stood in its way, and obstructed the energy of its march.

This is the point where the campaign finishes ; for there is a physical impossibility that the army, in its present state, can proceed much farther. I am not informed what the project of the executive council is, but suppose it means to make the Rhine the boundary of its conquests ; though Custine, in taking possession of Frankfort, presents views of more gigantic ambition. This will never do. The fate of the Duke of Brunswick is a lesson sufficiently striking : but they will be compelled, I fear, to feel the scourge of adversity themselves ; and
undergo

undergo its impressiv experience, in order to profit by the example. The force directed so uselessly against Frankfort, might have seized on Coblentz; and, if Dumourier be reinforced, and properly supported, the whole country between the Moselle and the Meuse may be cleared from the enemy, except Luxembourg, which, in that case, would fall of itself.

The Rhine will then form the boundary of Liberty; and in extending freedom thus far the French think themselves personally concerned. As for the rest, it is the use alone which they themselves will make of it, that will afford examples of imitation to others, and recommend its acquisition to the courage of surrounding nations.

LETTER VIII.

Paris, Feb. 10, 1793.

THE faction of the anarchists desired that the French king should be put to death without the tedious forms of a trial. This opinion, however, was confined to the summit of the Mountain, that elevated region, where, aloof from all the ordinary feelings of our nature, no one is diverted from his purpose by the weakness of humanity, or the compunction of remorse: where urbanity is considered as an aristocratical infringement of les grandes principes, and mercy as a crime de leze-nation*.

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The

* The great principles—High treason.

The trial of the king was decreed by the National Convention, and the eleventh of December was fixed upon for that purpose. Lewis the sixteenth had supported his long imprisonment with fortitude; and, when he heard that the day for his trial was fixed, he said with great calmness, "Eh bien! qu'on me guillotine si on veut; je suis préparé *."

A short time after the taking of the Bastile the king was observed reading the history of Charles the first. "Why, sire," said an attendant, "do you read that history? it will make you melancholy." "Je me mets dans l'esprit," replied the king, "qu'un jour je finirai comme lui †." It appears that the French queen has also chosen a model for her behaviour, in the last scene of life, from the English annals; for since her imprisonment she has been employed in reading the history of Mary queen of Scots. Marie Antoinette, however, is in no danger of sharing the same fate: if she were, her haughty indignant spirit, which preferred the chance of losing empire and life, to the certainty of retaining any thing less than absolute dominion, would probably meet death with becoming dignity, feeling, that "to be weak is to be miserable, doing or suffering."

When the municipal officers went to the Temple, and took from the royal prisoners their pocket knives, scissars, razors, &c. the king, while searching his pockets, said, "on n'a rien à craindre de moi ‡." The queen exclaimed in a scornful tone,
" Il

* "Well! let them *guillotine* me if they will; I am prepared."

† "I feel an impression on my mind, that one day I shall end like him."

‡ "They have nothing to fear from me."

“ Il faut prendre aussi nos aiguilles ; car elles piquent bien vivement *.”

Until the trial began the king was allowed to dine and sup with his family. After eating a good dinner he usually played two or three games at piquet with the queen ; and, when they had finished, the municipal officer upon guard in the apartment, without speaking, made a movement towards the door, which the queen understood, and was obliged to rise immediately, and leave the room.

Lewis the sixteenth behaved at the bar of the National Convention with calmness, and even dignity. He remembered that he had been a king ; and he proved that he had not that imbecility of mind which has been generally imputed to him. Philosophy, speaking the words of truth and soberness, may tell us, that kings, like other men, ought to be made accountable for their actions ; but she will also admit, that their faults have stronger claims to compassion than those of other men—educated, as they usually are, in delusion and error. Perhaps it is not very extraordinary, that Lewis the sixteenth, who had been taught from his earliest infancy “ the enormous faith of thousands made for one,” and who had never heard of any privileges but his own, recollecting what he was “ seventeen years ago,” considered slavery as the natural inheritance of his subjects, and the rights of man as but another term for treason. It must also be admitted, that, when a king undergoes the same punishment as another man, he is in truth punished more. The National Convention, if they determine to punish the dethroned monarch, will condemn

* “ You ought to take our needles too ; for they can prick very sharply.”

denn him to die: but do they, who are going to legislate for a mighty empire, know so little of the human heart, as not to know that to him the humiliation he already suffers is worse than death? After having obliged him to appear before them, all farther punishment is superfluous. When led through the streets of Paris as a prisoner, can he forget how often he has passed through those streets amidst the acclamations of the subject multitude? and, when condemned to stand at the bar of their assembly, till the president gives him leave to sit down, does not his remembrance—his agonized remembrance—glance back on those days, when to be seated in his presence was the appropriated privilege to which only a few could aspire?

Princes are placed in a sort of artificial condition: they live at a fullen distance from the dearest enjoyments of life, and are also in general exempted from its calamities. The poet, therefore, when he wishes to rouse our passions, paints some striking vicissitude of power and greatness. The regular murmurs of a gentle stream do not disturb the pensive meditation of the wanderer, who muses on its banks—it is the headlong torrent, rushing from its dizzy height over the fragments of the broken cliff, that seizes our astonished attention.

It was observed by some persons who were placed near the French king, when he appeared at the bar of the Convention, that he received the first papers which were shewn to him with haughty impatience, almost snatching them from the hand of the deputy by whom they were presented, and who, indeed, performed that office in a manner which did little honour to his delicacy, his feelings, or his republicanism; since he who could forget the respect due to misfortune—He who could be-
have

have to Lewis the sixteenth, when a prisoner at the bar of the Convention, as if he had been less than a man, would, probably, at the court of Versailles, have behaved to him as if he had been more. The king, after having recognised his own hand-writing, in the signature of those papers which were first given him to examine, was observed to receive those which were shewn to him afterwards with a sort of submissive gentleness, which marked the effect produced upon his mind by the appearance of those fatal testimonies—those testimonies of his having joined the league of despots, in their impotent crusade against the liberty and happiness of his people—those testimonies, that he had not only endeavoured to subvert that constitution which he had sworn to maintain, by inviting the armies of Prussia and of Austria to invade the French territory; but had also sought to undermine the spreading principles of liberty, by a system of corruption which was meant to grasp the whole empire, and included an infinite range of objects, from the most important to the most minute—from the leading orators of the National Assembly to the ballad-singers of the streets—from the reports of committees to hand-bills and placards. History will, indeed, condemn Lewis the sixteenth. The evidence of his guilt is clear; and the historian will fulfil his duty in passing sentence upon his memory; for the historian has not, like the judge, the prerogative to pardon. But Lewis the sixteenth will not stand alone at the bar of posterity. His judges also must appear at that tribunal: on them, also, the historian will pass sentence. He will behold the same men acting at once as accusers, party, and judge; he will behold the unfortunate monarch deprived, not only of his inviolability as a king, but of his rights as a citizen;

zen; and perhaps the irrevocable decree of posterity may reverse that of the National Convention.

The detail of the interrogation which the French king underwent at the bar of the National Convention is too well known to need repetition.—He was conducted back to the Temple about six in the evening: the night was dark; but the town was illuminated; and those objects which appeared only half formed, and were seen indistinctly, imagination finished and filled up, as best suited the gloomy impressions of the moment. By the way, since the second of September, when the whole town was lighted up for security, an illumination at Paris appears no gaudy pageant, which beams the symbol of public festivity; but is considered as the harbinger of danger—the signal of alarm—the tocsin of night. A considerable number of horse, as well as foot-guards, formed the escort of the king; and the trampling of the horses feet—the hoarse sounds of the collected multitude—the beating of drums—the frequent report of fire-arms—all conspired to excite the most solemn emotions. The long page of human history rushed upon the mind—age after age arose to memory, in sad succession, like the line of Banquo; and each seemed disfigured by crimes or darkened by calamity. The past was clouded with horror—a great experiment was about to be made for the future; but it was impossible to reflect, without trembling anxiety, that the stake was human happiness, and that the issue was doubtful, while all that could be calculated with certainty was, that millions must perish in the trial. It is asserted that the philosophers of France produced the revolution; I believe this to be an error. They, indeed, have disseminated the principles which form the basis of the new fabric of French

French government; but the ancient system was overthrown, not because it was unphilosophical, but because it could be upheld no longer. The revolution was the effect of imperious necessity: for, whatever permanent good may result from a change of government, the temporary evil is so certain, that every age is disposed to leave that work to a succeeding generation. The instinct of the people teaches them, that in framing a new government they can only hope, like Moses, to see the promised land, but not to enter it. They may plant the seeds of general prosperity, sown with toil and trouble, and bathed in blood; but the blooming vegetation and the golden fruit belong to another race of men.

The defence of Lewis the sixteenth, which was made by his counsel on the 26th of December, though it failed to prove his innocence, at least interested the humane part of the audience in behalf of his misfortunes: and such of that audience as reflected, that he who now stood an arraigned criminal at the bar of the Convention, had, four years ago, the destiny of twenty-five millions of people at the disposal of his will, felt that, whatever were his sins against the nation, he was already punished enough.

The discussion upon the king's defence was continued for many successive days in the National Convention, which became agitated by the most violent commotions. The faction of the Mountain repeatedly interrupted the deliberations on this subject by scenes of tumult and disorder hitherto unknown, even in that turbulent assembly. It was at that time believed, that a great majority of the National Convention desired, after passing sentence on the king, to appeal to the primary assemblies of

the people. The Mountain determined to oppose this measure by every effort in their power. Things appeared to be again hastening to some great crisis; both parties went armed to the Convention; a second massacre was expected, which, it was asserted, would include not only the royal family, but all those members of the Convention who should give their votes in the king's favour. The party of Gironde took measures for defence: meetings for this purpose were held in the dead of night with some of the *Fédérés*, of whom twelve thousand had reached Paris. Troops were daily arriving from the departments; and the moment seemed fast approaching when the two conflicting parties were to measure their strength. Nor could any sensation be more replete with horror than that which this fearful expectation excited. Imagination already beheld, like Macbeth, aerial daggers, and anticipated a sort of dark unknown danger, to which it could set no limits; since the wild spirit of popular fury, when set loose, might pass the bounds prescribed by the edicts of its abettors, as the ocean flood sometimes by an irresistible inundation throws down the feeble dykes which would arrest its progress.

At this time a commotion happened at one of the theatres, which, though not material in itself, served to mark the temper of the contending parties. A piece had lately been produced at that theatre, entitled, "*L'Ami des Loix*," which, it was said, was written before the tenth of August, enforcing the duty of obedience to the order of things then existing, and drawing a portrait of the patriots, as if they were lovers of anarchy. It happened whimsically enough, that this caricature of patriotism proved a faithful likeness of Robespierre, Marat,

Marat, &c. ; and it also happened, that that love of order, and submission to the laws then existing, which, while the conduct of the court made another revolution necessary, would have been considered as treason to the cause of liberty in this country, was now preached by every orthodox republican. Order and laws, however, being entirely subversive of Maratism, this piece had excited violent indignation in that faction. The Jacobins and the municipality of Paris formed a league against it ; and the latter sovereign power sent an order to the theatre, forbidding the performance. The people, in the mean-time, assembled in considerable numbers round the theatre, and insisted that the play should be performed ; while the author of the piece presented himself at the bar of the Convention, and related what was passing at the theatre.— The Convention passed to the order of the day, declaring as their reason for so doing, that the municipality had no right to controul the representation. . Santerre, commander in chief of the Parisian national guard, repaired to the theatre, in order to enforce submission to the municipality. This general had remained totally inactive on the second of September, when called upon by Petion to prevent the massacres ; but, whatever reluctance Santerre might feel to check assassination and murder, he thought it was highly necessary to prevent the alarming progress of order and law ; and for that purpose he hastened, surrounded by soldiers with their sabres drawn, to prevent the representation of the piece. But the commandant of the *Fédérés*, who had also marched his troops to the field of action, told Santerre, that if he attempted to interrupt the performance, the *Fédérés* would draw up their cannon before the theatre, and reduce it to ashes. Santerre hung his head,

head, lamented the decline of municipal despotism, and retired. The piece was acted amidst the loudest acclamations.

The next day the commune of Paris took its revenge of these friends of law, by ordering all the public places to be shut up for a week : this order was denounced and discussed in the National Convention. That assembly, wearied, perhaps ashamed, of its past forbearance towards the commune, which on all occasions acts as if it had succeeded by right of inheritance to the ancient power of the house of Bourbon, determined to throw the police of the city into the hands of the executive council during the king's trial ; and the executive council instantly repealed the order of the commune.

The day after the commotion at the theatre, the Marseillois, and the other Fedérés who were then at Paris, appeared at the bar of the National Convention ; and the Marseillois, in the name of the eighty-four departments, presented an address, which breathed forth the most ardent patriotism, the most profound submission to the laws, and the most inflexible hatred of anarchy. If the liberty of France, after all the convulsions it sustains, shall at length be firmly established, the Marseillois will have a right to claim immortal pre-eminence amongst the sons of freedom. Those children of the sun, whose ardent souls glow with the purest fires of patriotism ; and who have given their country examples of that heroic valour, which the sacred love of freedom can alone inspire, have shewn that, while they best defend its cause, they also best understand its principles. They have said to their enthusiastic zeal, " thus far thou shalt go, and no farther ;" nor have they sullied their laurels by one act of disobedience to the laws.

When

When the sanguinary commune of Paris, immediately after the massacres of September, dispatched circular letters to all the departments, spreading over the kingdom their edicts of death; or, to use their own language, ordering the municipal officers to clear the prisons of aristocrats; the Marseillois hastened to the prisons of their city, but not, like the avenging fiends who encompassed the abbey of St. Germain, to slaughter unresisting victims. The Marseillois came like ministering angels of mercy, to inspire the trembling wretch with fortitude—to cheer the drooping spirit—to sustain the failing heart—to declare that every prisoner was under the protection of the law; and, if it were necessary, should by them be defended from violence. The generous Marseillois, with the noble courage of the lion, disdained to wound a prostrate enemy, and left to the commune of Paris to practise the fullen rapacity of the vulture.

When the *Fédérés* appeared at the bar of the Convention, they demanded permission to guard the assembly in conjunction with the national guard of Paris. "If it is an honour," said they, "we have an equal right with the Parisians to partake it—if there is danger, we demand our share."—"Si les hommes du deux Septembre ont encore l'audace de se montrer, c'est avec les hommes du dix Août qu'ils auront à combattre, c'est ici un cartel de la vertu au vice*." This address appeared to electrify the whole assembly. It was instantly, and almost unanimously decreed that the *Fédérés* should, together with the Parisians, guard the Convention: nor did the Mountain dare to oppose

* "If the men of the second of September dare again appear, it is with the men of the tenth of August that they will have to engage—it will be the cartel of virtue and of vice."

oppose the decree, but remained in a sort of pallid stupefaction.

On the 14th of January the king's trial, which had been suspended for a week, was resumed, and a few days after the fate of the unhappy monarch was decided. The attention of all Europe was fixed in anxious suspense on the issue of this important trial; and the situation of Lewis the sixteenth excited universal sympathy. But at Paris it cast a peculiar horror—a sort of local gloom over the whole city; it seemed as if the National Convention had chosen the very means most proper to re-kindle the dying flame of loyalty. We remembered that the king had betrayed his people, till, by the rigour of their resentment, they made us lose the sense of his guilt in the greatness of his calamities. They wished us to feel indignation at his offence, and they compelled us to weep for his misfortunes. They called on our abhorrence of the ungenerous use he had made of the power with which he was entrusted, and we saw how little magnanimous was the use which they made of theirs. Their decision seemed at once so cruel and so impolitic, that it is not surprising if, instead of appearing to foreign nations in the light of a painful sacrifice made to public security, it bore the aspect of public security sacrificed to inhumanity and vengeance. It were, however, an error to believe, either that Lewis the sixteenth fell the victim of that barbarous thirst for his blood displayed by the chiefs of the Mountain, or that he was devoted to death by the pusillanimity of those who were influenced by considerations of their own personal safety. No; while we admire the heroic courage of such as, in defiance of the popular outcry, pleaded with pathetic eloquence the cause of mercy;

mercy; while we love the humanity of Brissot, the philosophy of Condorcet, we must admit, that amongst those who voted for the death of Lewis the sixteenth are found men equally incapable of being actuated by fear or by vengeance; men, who, considering the king's death as essential to the security of the republic, pronounced the fatal sentence in the bitterness of their souls, and as the performance of a cruel duty which their country imperiously required.

The proposition of an appeal to the departments was rejected, because it was apprehended, that such an appeal might lead to civil war. The primary assemblies must have been called together: the aristocrats and the demagogues would alike have endeavoured to influence these assemblies by the force of intrigue and corruption; and the minds of the people would have been solely occupied by this affair, at the moment when it was necessary to prepare for the approaching formidable campaign. These were the evils which were dreaded from an appeal to the people, while all the good which could have resulted from this measure would have been that of proving to the world, that, in whatever abhorrence the death of the French king may be held by Europe, or by posterity, this act of severity was demanded by the voice of the whole French nation. It was feared, that, if Lewis the sixteenth were detained in captivity, the bourgeois of Paris, if their commerce languished—if provisions became dear—if the armies of the republic sustained any defeat, might demand the restoration of their dethroned monarch: yet all the departments of France had, even while they reprobated the evils of anarchy, declared their inviolable attachment to a republican form of government. Such a difference
of

of opinion, therefore, would have produced the most terrible commotions. Lastly, it was asserted, that, if the king were sent into exile, he would, after the republic had exhausted all the national treasures in support of war, after the people had become wearied of long continued struggles for liberty, return at the head of a powerful army, which would be joined by all the malcontents of France, and assisted by all the potentates of Europe.

It was observed, that, although the family of Stuart, banished by the English nation, wandered over Europe, unpitied and abandoned, the family of Bourbon would as certainly find support and assistance. England had only changed the family of its sovereign; France had changed the form of its government. England only desired to retain a limited monarchy; France had not only subverted monarchy, and established a republic, but had set principles on float which, if suffered to spread, might lead to the general subversion of monarchical power. The princes of Europe had nothing to dread from the banishment of James the second; but their descendants had one common cause with Louis the sixteenth; and what he could never have hoped from their generosity, he might from their policy have obtained.

In addition to the foregoing reasons for putting the unfortunate monarch to death, there was yet another reason, perhaps stronger than all the rest: and this was, that the National Convention felt itself reduced to the dismal alternative of leading the king to the scaffold, or of seeing not only himself but his whole family torn in pieces by the enraged populace. On the 10th of August, and the day following, more than an hundred carts, loaded with dead bodies, had passed through the streets of Paris:

ris: the people remembered that fatal spectacle—they considered their fallen relations and friends as the victims of the court, and would too certainly have satiated their vengeance in the most inhuman manner: nor had the Convention any power to prevent this violence, in which the National Guard and the *Fédérés* would have joined.

The French king received the intelligence of his approaching fate without dismay. He displayed far more firmness upon the scaffold than he had done upon the throne, and atoned for the weakness and inconsistency of his conduct in life, by the calmness and fortitude of his behaviour in death. The evening before his execution, his family, from whom he had been separated since the commencement of his trial, were conducted to the tower of the Temple, and allowed the sad indulgence of a last interview, unmolested by the presence of his guards. Alas! when imagination pictured the anguish of such an interview, it was not necessary to look back upon the former elevation of the sufferer, in order to pity the gloomy transition in his fate! it was not necessary to recollect, that he who was the following morning to suffer death upon the scaffold, was once the first monarch of Europe, and would be led to execution through the streets of his own capital! It was enough to consider this unfortunate person as a man, a husband, a father! Ah, surely, amidst the agonies of final separation from those to whom we are bound by the strongest ties of nature and affection! surely when we cling to those we love, in the unutterable pang of a last embrace—in such moments the monarch must forget his crown, and the regrets of disappointed ambition must be unfelt amidst the anguish which overwhelms the broken heart.—That anguish was not confined to the bosom

son of the king, the queen, and his sister. The princess, his daughter, has attained that age when perhaps the soul is most susceptible of strong impressions, and its sensibility most exquisite. Even the young prince, who is only in his ninth year, caught the infectious sorrow, and while his eyes were bathed in tears, cried, sobbing, to Santerre, "Ah, laissez moi courir les rues!—j'irai aux districts—j'irai a tous les sections, demander grace pour mon papa*!"

The king had sufficient firmness to avoid seeing his family on the morning of his execution! He desired the queen might be told that he was unable to bear the sight of her and his children in those last moments! He took a ring off his finger, which contained some of his own hair, of the queen's, and of his two children, and desired it might be given to the queen. He called the municipal officers round him, and told them, it was his dying request, that Clery, his valet de chambre, might remain with his son. He then said to Santerre, "† Marchons," and after crossing, with a hurried pace, the inner court of the Temple, he got into the mayor's carriage, which was in waiting, and was attended by his confessor.

It is certain that many of those acts of illegal power, which brought the unhappy monarch to the scaffold, were dictated by the fanatical and discontented clergy which swarmed about his palace; by non-juring bishops and archbishops; men who having lost their wealth and their influence by the revolution, prompted the king to run all risques in order

* "Oh! let me run through the streets—I will go to the districts—I will go to all the sections, and beg for my papa."

† "Let us go."

order to gratify their own resentment. Some good, however, arose from this evil. In order to increase their influence, they had led the king into habits of constant devotion: and he had found in devotion what it is natural for the human heart to find, a refuge from calamity. In proportion as his misfortunes increased, and the prospects of this world darkened around him, he appears to have sought the soothing perspective of a better region; and the gloomy solitude of his prison was cheered by the bright visions of futurity. If such is the effect even of a superstitious and bigoted devotion, let the philosophers of France beware of banishing religion from their country because of its ancient abuses. Many of the French philosophers are, indeed, bigots to infidelity, and narrow minded in unbelief—many of them have rejected what they have not examined, and pronounced judgment upon things of which they are ignorant.

The calmness which Louis the sixteenth displayed on this great trial of human fortitude, is attributed not only to the support his mind had received from religious faith, but also to the hope which it is said he cherished, even till his last moment, that the people, whom he meant to address from the scaffold, would demand that his life might be spared. And his confessor, from motives of compassion, had encouraged him in this hope. After ascending the scaffold with a firm step, twice the unhappy monarch attempted to speak, and twice Santerre prevented him from being heard, by ordering the drums to beat immediately. Alas! had he been permitted to speak, poor was his chance of exciting commiseration! Those who pitied his calamities had carefully shunned that fatal spot; and those who most immediately surrounded him only waited till the stroke

stroke was given, in order to dip their pikes and their handkerchiefs in his blood!

Setting aside all considerations of the former elevated rank, or the peculiar misfortunes of the sufferer, to refuse the privilege of utterance to one whose lips are the next moment to be closed in death—has in it something so repugnant to all the feelings of our nature, that it seems a degree of severity which could only have been practised by that man who had remained passive when the cry of humanity called upon him to act, and who was prompted to action at the very moment when the same sentiment urged him to desist. It is, however, asserted by many persons, that Santerre, in having hindered the king from being heard, only performed his duty, and perhaps prevented the most terrible mischiefs. The utmost precaution had indeed been used to avoid any disorder, or the possibility of impeding the execution of the sentence. Every section of Paris was under arms: a third part of the citizens of each section were appointed to guard that section to which they belonged; a third part to form the escort of the king, and a third part to patrol the streets. Forty pieces of cannon were brought to the place of execution! and the fathers, the sons, and brothers of those who fell on the roth of August, had been assiduously selected to surround the scaffold! It was also understood, that orders had been issued, that any person who cried *grace*, should be instantly put to death. Notwithstanding these precautions, an address from the king might have produced a popular movement in his favour.

The French are a people of quick sensibility: they seem in some sort the creatures of passion. Ungovernable in their resentment, cruel and ferocious in their revenge, they yield with no less facility

cility to the impulse of mercy, and the sympathy of compassion. Ever in extremes, they are capable of the most sublime and the most atrocious actions, and inspire alternate love and detestation.

Had the king being able to excite the pity of any part of that armed multitude which filled the vast Place de la Revolution, a profusion of blood might have been spilt—A civil war might have spread desolation through the city of Paris; but the life of the king would have been no less sacrificed—and instead of receiving death at one stroke, he would probably have fallen pierced by a thousand wounds. Two persons who were on the scaffold assert, that the unhappy monarch, finding the hope he had cherished, of awakening the compassion of the people, frustrated by the impossibility of his being heard as a last resource, declared that he had secrets to reveal of importance to the safety of the state, and desired he might be led to the National Convention. Some of the guards who heard this declaration, cried, "Yes, let him go to the Convention!"—Others said "No."—Had the king been conducted to the Convention, it is easy to imagine the effect which would have been produced on the minds of the people, by the sight of their former monarch led thro' the streets of Paris, with his hands bound, his neck bare, his hair already cut off at the foot of the scaffold in preparation for the fatal stroke—with no other covering than his shirt. At that sight the enraged populace would have melted into tenderness, and the Parisian women, among whom were numbers who passed the day in tears of unavailing regret, would have rushed between the monarch and his guards, and have attempted his rescue, even with the risque of life. Santerre, who foresaw these consequences, who perceived the danger of this

this rising dispute among the guards, called to the executioner to do his office.—Then it was that despair seized upon the mind of the unfortunate monarch—his countenance assumed a look of horror—twice with agony he repeated, “Je suis perdu ! je suis perdu * 1” His confessor meantime called to him from the foot of the scaffold, “Louis, fils de St. Louis, montez au ciel † ;” and in one moment he was delivered from the evils of mortality.

The executioner held up the bleeding head, and the guards cried “Vive la Republique !” Some dipt their handkerchiefs in the blood—but the greater number, chilled with horror at what had passed, desired the commandant would lead them instantly from the spot. The hair was sold in separate tresses at the foot of the scaffold ; and, as if every incident of this tragedy had been intended to display the strange vicissitudes of human fortune, as if every scene were meant “to point a moral,” the body was conveyed in a cart to the parish church of St. Madelaine, and laid among the bodies of those who had been crushed to death on the Place de Louis XV. when Louis the sixteenth was married, and of those who had fallen before the chateau of the Tuilleries on the 10th of August.

The grave was filled with quick lime, and a guard was placed over it till the corpse was consumed. The ground was then carefully levelled with the surrounding earth, and no trace or vestige remains of that spot to which, shrouded by the doubtful gloom of twilight, ancient loyalty might have repaired, and poured a tear, or superstition breathed its ritual for the departed spirit.

* I am undone ! I am undone !”

† “Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven !”

That

That sympathy which the misfortunes of Louis the sixteenth excited in his behalf, is now transferred to his family. Whatever have been the faults of the French queen, they have surely been expiated by her sufferings. Madame Elizabeth, his sister, has displayed an attachment to her brother, for which those who consider his cause as a good one, will think she almost deserves altars; and even the most determined republican of France must admit, that to follow the fortunes of a brother, from a palace to a prison, to resign liberty, and to risk his life, rather than forsake those we love in their calamities, are generous, and even heroical sacrifices. The young princess was so deeply affected by her father's fate that it was for some days believed her life was in danger! The prince too was heard to enquire, "Pourquoi a t'on fait mourir mon papa? mon papa n'a pas fait du mal—est-ce qu'on me ferai mourir moi?*" Since the king's death the queen always addresses the prince by the appellation of Sire: she does not take her place at table till after he is seated, and shews him all the customary forms of respect practised towards the representative of the house of Bourbon. Such ceremonies are not unavailing, if they afford consolation or relief in the solitude of that prison where this unfortunate family will probably pass years of joyless existence. In that prison where the windows only admit a dim religious light—where no sound is heard except the clashing of arms, is she immured who was once the leader of pleasure—who once lived encompassed with

"Pomp, and feast, and revelry,

"With masque, and antique pageantry."

* "Why have they put my papa to death? my papa had done no harm—will they make me die too?"

The

The queen sent to ask mourning of the National Convention. One is surprised she did not feel with Hamlet,

“ ’Tis not alone this mourning suit,
 “ Together with all forms, modes, shapes of grief,
 “ That can denote me truly.”

At the time of the king's death Kerfaint and Manuel, two members of the National Convention, distinguished for their talents, and Roland, minister for the interior, gave in their dismissal. Kerfaint declared he would no longer sit in the same assembly with the assassins of the second of September. The Assembly passed a decree, that the assassins should be prosecuted by the minister of justice—but hitherto, alas, while the crime is engraved on the lasting tablet of human history, the edicts of punishment have been traced in dust, and scattered in air.

Manuel had been accused by the chiefs of the Mountain of endeavouring, as secretary, to suppress the majority of votes against the king, and had been so rudely menaced, that in disgust he quitted his post. Manuel was the George Selwyn of the National Convention; and had often darted on the Mountain the flashes of his wit. One day, when he had made that faction feel a stroke of pleasantry, Legendre, who is one of the party, and who was formerly a butcher, exclaimed in a scornful tone, “ Il faut decreter que Manuel à de l'esprit.” “ Il valoit mieux,” answered Manuel, “ de decreter, que je suis *bête*, car alors Legendre auroit le droit de me tuer *.”

* We must decree that Manuel is a wit.”—“ It would be better to decree that I am a beast (which in French phraseology means a fool), for then Legendre would have a right to kill me.”

The

The resignation of Roland was regretted by all, except that faction who could neither forgive his austere, inflexible virtues, nor his abhorrence of their vices. He had been marked as one of the victims of September; and, though he had escaped assassination, all the rectitude of his conduct could not secure him from calumny. It was asserted, that he detested the Parisians, because he expressed his detestation of the crimes of which Paris had been the theatre; and it was alleged, that he usurped an improper influence over the departments, because he had assiduously endeavoured to enlighten and to instruct them. The purity of his reputation remained as untainted by these accusations, as the sun-beam by the cloud which passes over it. Nor would Roland have been driven from his post by the censure of the chiefs of the Mountain. The hatred they bore him was in the natural order of things: he had been the first to denounce their crimes, and to demand their punishment.

"Ask you what provocation he has had?"

"The strong antipathy of good to bad."

But Roland found that it was not alone the faction of the Mountain by whom his conduct was disapproved. He found many persons, who, though incapable of the actions which excited his abhorrence, were less delicate in morals than himself, and blamed the impatience he expressed at the evils of the revolution. Those persons declared, that it was not extraordinary if the people of Paris, who had so lately prevented the armies of Prussia and Austria from invading their city, and perhaps reducing it to ashes, by an insurrection, that had

overthrown the government, had for a while forgotten the respect due to laws, when, by their adherence to those which they had once believed secured their freedom and happiness, they had been nearly led to ruin, which they had only escaped by violating and subverting them altogether.—Thus, the only crime imputed to Roland was that rigid virtue of which his contemporaries were not worthy—his sole offence was hating vice too much.—But Roland disdained all accommodating principles, and retired from office for no other reason than that he was too pure to hold it. Perhaps he may again be called from the station of a private citizen, by the voice of his country: if not, he has done enough for immortality, and when, in perusing the history of the French revolution, the mind is fatigued with the relation of those crimes which disgrace one disastrous page, it will turn to the unsullied worth of Roland, and find repose and comfort. To him may justly be applied those well-known lines of our poet:

“ Statesman, yet friend to truth ! of soul sincere,
 “ In action faithful, and in honour clear ;
 “ Who broke no promise, serv’d no private end,
 “ Who gain’d no riches, and who lost no friend.”

LETTER IX.

PARIS, *April 17, 1793.*

LEWIS the sixteenth had been offered up as a sacrifice on the altar of equality, and the Mountain chiefs could no longer make his existence a pretext for suspicion, tumult, and insurrection. Immediately after his fate was decided, a plan of constitution was presented by the committee of legislation to the National Convention: and, as it would have been difficult to frame a system of government more purely democratical, it was hoped, that even the Mountain would concur in its establishment. But it was soon found that clouds and darkness still hung upon the future. It was soon found that a few lines traced in black and white would little avail to control that fierce conflict of passions excited in this country, and which has since arisen to its most formidable height of turbulence and disorder. An extensive scheme of counter-revolution had been formed, in which, probably, the leaders of the Mountain acted as the auxiliaries of the aristocracy, though with such different views that it formed but an ill-assorted alliance. The project of an insurrection at Paris had been connected with that of an insurrection in several of the departments; and it had been concerted, that, at the very moment when the capital became the scene of a massacre of the national representatives, those provinces were to raise the banner of revolt.

More than twenty thousand emigrants had found means to return to Paris, many of whom were the immediate emissaries of the French princes, and of foreign courts. These emigrants acquitted themselves of their agency with zeal and activity: they contrived to glide into the tribunes of the National Convention, into the popular societies, the assemblies of the sections, and the groups of the Tuilleries: they had assumed as many Protean forms as suited their purpose, and had acted with admirable address the part of furious demagogues. These aristocrats had, together with chiefs of the party of the Mountain, carefully taught the people, that to exercise their sovereignty, in the violation of laws which they found irksome or disagreeable, was an act of heroic virtue; that the pillage of monopolists was nothing more than the execution of summary justice; and that the partial insurrection of a mob was no less glorious than the mighty insurrection of the whole nation, when, with one consent it overthrew despotism, and asserted its just rights. As well might they have compared the sun advancing in his majesty, chasing the pestilential vapours from his orb, and spreading light over the horizon, to the angry and transient meteor which flashes across the sky, and which rises and sets in darkness. The excessive high price of sugar furnished a pretence to put in practice the lesson of sedition which had thus been inculcated; and on the twenty-fifth of February a pillage took place in the shops of the grocers. The aristocrats hoped by this pillage to prevent the city of Paris from furnishing twelve thousand men, which it had engaged to do, towards recruiting the army: they hoped that the soldiers would hasten with less alacrity to the frontiers, when they were to leave their wives

wives and their children to the mercy of enemies as savage as those they were going to encounter. This conjecture was well founded; and the business of recruiting went on with languor. Meantime the returning spring had again put the armies of the continent in movement, and the horrors of war were again renewed. The moral and natural world appeared at melancholy variance; and, while one unfolded the prospect of beauty, harmony, and order, the other presented a hideous perspective of carnage and desolation, a waste of life at which humanity shudders.

On the eighth of March intelligence was received at Paris from the army, that the French troops had sustained some loss at Aix la Chapelle. The municipality of Paris immediately ordered the public places to be shut up, and called the citizens to their respective sections; where the people without hesitation consented to leave their occupations, their trades, and enlisted themselves in the service of their country with such ardour, and in such numbers, that, although the municipality had determined to furnish twenty-four thousand instead of twelve, they found themselves obliged to restrain the impetuous zeal of the people. Indignation at the check which the French arms had received served to awaken a flame of fresh enthusiasm in the minds of the Parisians.—Every man appeared to think that the fate of the republic depended on his valourous exertions: every man fancied himself a hero, and seemed ready—

“ To drive into the bottom of the deep,

“ Or snatch bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon.”

And, in case of defeat and invasion, the romantic project was formed of throwing aside all arts, all commerce,

commerce, all occupations but war, and of marching if it were necessary, in a hundred columns composed of the whole French nation, to repel the attacks of its enemies.

While the sections of Paris were taking measures to reinforce the armies of the republic, the emissaries of the aristocracy considered the present moment as too favourable to their designs to be lost. On the evening of the ninth of March a stranger proposed at the Jacobins, to go the next morning to the National Convention, where he invited the people in the tribunes to meet them, in order to rid the state of its enemies—of the Brissotins—the Rolandists—the Girondines, by whose conspiracies the army had been betrayed and the soldiers slaughtered. The Jacobins, who have not only the fever of revolution burning in their veins, but the highest delirium of that fever, never reject an incendiary measure. This proposition was sufficiently combustible for those fiery spirits: it rose to what they call the elevation of their principles, and was accordingly adopted.

It is a melancholy truth, that the society of Jacobins—that society

whose mutual league,

United thoughts and councils, equal hope,

And hazard in the glorious enterprize,

Joined once,

are now endeavouring to crush in its birth that liberty which they contributed to create; and of which they were so long the jealous guardians.

During the night of the ninth, the assassins, who had prepared their plans of murder for the following day, determined not to remain idle. They went to several printing-houses, where journals

were

were published which preach liberty, but not insurrection: some they destroyed; others, hearing of the fate of their fellow-labourers, prepared themselves for defence, and drove the russians away. It seemed as if some principle of shame, or of remorse, still lurked in their bosoms; and that, in preparation for the desperate deeds of the following day, they wished to prevent the possibility of recording their crimes.

On the morning of the tenth a watch word was given to the sentinels at the doors of the Convention by some persons unknown, forbidding them to suffer any women to enter the tribunes of the assembly that day; because, said these persons, we have an expedition to make, and men only must be admitted. The order was punctually executed: not one woman appeared in the galleries, which were filled with armed men.

On the evening of the tenth, some thousands of armed persons again assembled in the Champs Elysées, on the terrace of the Feuillans, and crowds filled the hall of the Jacobins. It was proposed to divide their forces. One party was to attack the Convention, and the other the members of the executive council. It was resolved to shut the gates of the city, to ring the tocsin, and then to march to the scene of action. Several circumstances, however, concurred to prevent the perpetration of their horrid purposes. Some of those members of the Convention who were marked as the first victims of the conspiracy, were absent. As the danger approached the chiefs of the Mountain began to tremble for their own personal safety: they began to apprehend that the opposite party would not suffer themselves to be sacrificed without resistance, without aiming some blow at the leaders
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of the conspiracy. Guilt is not always bold; and Robespierre had been warned, that, if any violence were attempted on the Gironde party, he should be the first to fall. The commune of Paris, also, though sufficiently ready for a massacre when they judge that measure to be expedient, believed it was then unnecessary. But, what most effectually disconcerted the plan of insurrection was, that the Fauxbourg St. Antoine refused to join in it.

In the progress of the French revolution we find the inhabitants of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, who overthrew the towers of the Bastille, and the Marseillois, who besieged and took the chateau of the Tuilleries, those men who have achieved the revolution, and whose ideas of liberty are so warm and glowing, that they may truly be said to have—

“Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.” ✓

are the men who have been foremost to shew their submission to the decrees of the representatives of the people, and who have uniformly expressed no less abhorrence of anarchy than love of freedom. The inhabitants of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, when called upon by the Jacobins to lend their powerful arm to the meditated insurrection, indignantly replied—“When we were in danger of being crushed by the despotism or the treachery of the court, insurrection was necessary: but against whom are we now to rise? Against the men whom we have chosen for our representatives—No; when we disapprove of their conduct, we will take from them the power we have delegated, but we will not stain our hands in their blood.”

While these things were passing at Paris, some of the departments became the scenes of insurrection.

tion. The deluded peasants of Brittany, wrought up by their priests to the highest fervour of fanaticism, bearing the crucifix in their hands, and all the rage of superstitious frenzy in their hearts, devoted themselves to death with that confidence which only religious enthusiasm, the most powerful sentiment of the human mind, can inspire. When taken prisoners, they demanded but a few minutes to repeat a prayer, which would open to them the gates of Paradise; and they submitted to the stroke of death with the transport of the martyr.

Mean time Dumourier, he, on the phalanx of whose genius the nation reposed its confidence; he, whose name was in itself an host, proved faithless to his trust; and, after the unfortunate battle of Nirvender, betrayed, and at length abandoned, his country.

The friend who favoured me with the account you have read of Dumourier's campaign, has written the history of his desertion of the popular cause in a manner so clear and interesting, that, instead of attempting to trace the event myself, which I should do very imperfectly, I shall subjoin my friend's letter; and content myself with giving you a sketch of Dumourier's character, which I have had some opportunities of knowing from persons who have long lived with him in habits of intimacy.

The distinguished abilities of Dumourier were well known to all Europe; and therefore, when he assumed the tone of a dictator; when he threw down his gauntlet at the National Convention, menaced that assembly with annihilation, and declared himself the lawgiver of his country, it was generally believed that he was too wise to have

avowed his purpose, until he had secured at least the probable means of effecting it. When his mandates were delivered at the Convention, all Paris concluded that he spoke as the organ of his army. It was believed that, warned by the example of La Fayette, who, when he invited his troops to enforce a system of government which the voice of the people had overthrown, found himself suddenly deserted, and compelled to seek his safety in flight. Dumourier could not so far mistake the spirit of his country, as to engage in a similar enterprise, without having previously ensured success. It requires a knowledge of the minuter traits of his character to account for his having cast his high fortune upon so precarious a chance, for his having risked what has actually happened, being forced to seek an asylum with the enemies he had vanquished; while all he can offer them is the equivocal, the suspected services of a traitor to his own country, and the auxiliary support of a general without an army. He, who but a few months past was the terror of other nations, and the admiration of his own!

“ ————— I have seen

“ The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind

“ To hear him speak; the matrons flung their gloves,

“ Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs

“ Upon him as he passed; the nobles bended

“ As to Jove’s statue, and the Commons made

“ A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:

“ I never saw the like.”

The extraordinary vicissitudes of the French revolution had called Dumourier from a station of life, in which he thought himself happy to be employed in a subordinate part of political negotiations, to the highest military honours; and fortune had

had bound his brow with all the laurels of victory. But it is not the first time that fortune, by leading her favourites to the dangerous pinnacle of glory, has rendered their fall more conspicuous. There are two leading traits in the character of Dumourier, the spirit of intrigue and of vanity—He had been employed under the ancient government as an emissary in foreign courts, and had so much the habit of intrigue, that he practised it even on the most trifling occasions. He loved to pursue his purpose, whatever it might be, by a winding path, instead of walking towards it straight forwards; and carried this propensity to such ridiculous excess that he reminded one of Young's fine lady:

"For her own breakfast she'll project a scheme,
Nor drink her tea without a stratagem."

At the same time his vanity, which was unbounded, was highly elated, not only by the brilliant success of his arms, but by the respect with which he found himself treated by all the powers of Europe.

Foreign nations, while they refused to acknowledge the French republic, sent their agents to his camp; and, while they disdained to treat with the executive council of France, were anxious to negotiate with its general. Dumourier had since the revolution adopted the fashion of his country, and affected to despise aristocracy and monarchy; but those who knew him intimately discerned, through the veil of philosophy with which he had enveloped himself, an attachment, not so much to monarchical power, as to the tinsel and drapery of courts. He was not only covetous of great, but of little distinctions; and when, in his camp, surrounded by his general officers, he received that kind of homage which military subordination exacts, he is
said

said to have compared himself to Choiseul amidst the pomp of his crowded levee ; and to have exulted no less in the accidental honours which belonged to his situation, than in those which were the claim of his genius.

Though he possessed a great share of understanding, he possessed not quite enough. " He was proud even to the altitude of his virtue ;" and, while his pride was fed by the acclamations of Europe, his indignation was roused by the calumnies with which the faction of the Mountain had endeavoured to cloud the meridian splendour of his glory. Yes, it is one of the crimes of that detestable faction, that they have precipitated his fall, and been the cause of his perdition. They had long since declared, that the hero of Gemmappe had acquired victories only for the purpose of making himself popular, and of subverting the republic—they had persecuted the deliverer of his country with denunciations—they had menaced him with the scaffold in recompense for his important services—they had stung his haughty spirit almost to madness ;—until at length, wounded by injustice, goaded by vengeance, impelled by ambition, he has betrayed the nation he had saved, and cast an eternal shade over his honourable fame.

" —————The benefit

" Which he shall thereby reap, is such a name,

" Whose repetition shall be dogged with curses,

" Whose chronicle thus writ, "the man was noble ;

" But with his last attempt he wip'd it out—

" Betray'd his country :—and his name remains

" To th' ensuing age abhor'd."

Although every person of sense and integrity in France lamented the internal disorders excited by the Mountain faction, yet no man chose to receive laws

laws imposed by Dumourier at the head of a conquering army. This would have been flying from Scylla to Charybdis. The most determined republicans of France felt that the sovereignty of a King was far less offensive than the tyranny of a Cromwell; and, however wide were the different opinions which divided the French on other points, all were unanimous in regarding Dumourier as their common enemy. His army were strongly attached to that general, who had led them to victory; but no sooner did he declare his purpose, than he broke the spell by which his soldiers were bound to his fortunes, and suddenly found his crowded camp transformed into a desert.

The desertion of Dumourier, which appeared at first sight to involve in it the ruin of his country, will probably produce some salutary effects: it will teach the faction of the Mountain, and the French nation in general, an useful lesson. The Mountain chiefs have discovered, that the people of Paris are not so absolutely subjected to their will as they imagined; but, on the contrary, have displayed some symptoms of being wearied of the despotism of anarchy; since, at the moment when they believed Dumourier was approaching at the head of an hostile army, although Danton from the tribune of the National Convention preached the doctrine of insurrection, and the massacre of those he denominated the enemies of the people, that very people, after receiving the incendiary lesson, calmly resorted to their respective sections, offered to march against the invaders, and in the mean time maintained the most perfect tranquillity and good order. The theatres continued open, the public walks were crowded, and no one could have guessed, from the general aspect of the city, that
it

it was menaced with invasion. At the same time it has unfortunately happened, that the treason of Dumourier has raised the credit of Marat. That accusing spirit, who employs life in one long denunciation of all that is eminent from station, talents, or virtue, had accused every minister, every general, and every distinguished legislator of the republic. If, therefore, corruption or treason should any where be found, Marat was sure to find it:

“ Prophet of woe, and harbinger of ill.

He had accused La Fayette, and La Fayette justified the prediction. He had pronounced Dumourier a traitor, and, alas! Dumourier has fulfilled the prediction! Can we then be surprised, that the lower classes of the people, the yet agitated multitude, are misled by the voice of their prophet? Can we wonder that they are suspicious, when they find themselves so often betrayed? This is perhaps the most dismal consequence of the repeated treachery of those entrusted with power, that it weakens in the people all belief in virtue.

With respect to Marat himself, his conduct is perfectly consistent: he acts with all the wisdom which can belong to villainy. Conscious that not only his power must cease with the establishment of order, but that his crimes must be punished, the law of self-preservation determines him to prolong the reign of anarchy. He feels like Macbeth, that he has stepped too far in crimes to recede, and will rush on till his career terminates, as there is reason to believe it will, in his own destruction.— Nations, as well as individuals, may profit by adversity: the check which the French have received, the treason of their generals, and the ill success
of

of their crusade in the Belgic provinces, may teach them, that their former abjuration of conquest was no less politic than philosophical; and they will probably relinquish for ever their Quixote expeditions in favour of liberty. They will no longer send forth their tutelar divinity, armed with the pike and the bayonet, prepared not to invite but to compel; not to convince, but to conquer. Instead of attempting to disorganize the systems of government which prevail in other countries, they will begin by organizing their own—and before they desire other nations to throw off the sovereignty of kings, they will be careful to demonstrate that there is no tyranny in the sovereignty of the people.

Hitherto they have only proved to the world, that the passage from despotism to liberty is long and terrible—like the passage of Milton's Satan from hell to earth, when

“ His ear was peal'd
 “ With noises loud and ruinous; — — —
 “ — — — — as if this frame
 “ Of heav'n were falling, and these elements
 “ In mutiny had from her axle torn
 “ The stedfast earth.”

When the French have passed the “ wild abyss,” then will Europe discern and judge whether the produce of their new political creation be happiness or misery; whether the theory of equality can be reduced to practice, and receive “ a local habitation and a name;” or whether it will prove a thought beyond the reaches of our souls, and melt away to airy nothing, while abolished privileges are renewed, and separate the collected mass of the people into distinct classes: whether, beneath the specious semblance of freedom, the hideous monster

ster of anarchy shall continue to drag into day new crimes and unknown calamities; or whether liberty, uncontaminated, pure, exalted, and sublime liberty, shall descend like the guardian genius of mankind, to regenerate the human race; to bind them together by the cords of peace and of good-will: to mould society into a form of simple and beautiful proportions; to "illumine what is dark—what is low, raise and support; that to the height of her great argument the nations may ascend," and prove worthy of more perfect systems of legislation, and a wider sphere of virtue and of happiness!

ADIEU.

LETTER X.

Paris, April 10.

Second Year of the Republic.

PLACED amidst circumstances where the great events that are passing succeed each other so rapidly, that it is almost as difficult to consider them separately, with attention, as it is impossible to calculate their effects, you impose a task on me which I am incapable of fulfilling: for so new and unexpected are they, and so little relation do they bear to the past, that it would be rash to hazard any prediction of the future, from what we now behold.

The events of the last month have been in appearance so fatal to the republic, that without some consideration,

consideration, one might be at a loss to know how the stock of public calamity might have been increased; and so much the greater is it, that the cause of their misfortunes remains yet unacknowledged, whilst mutual accusation, distrust, and suspicion are aggravating the evil. Whatever have been the causes of this melancholy reverse, the true and genuine friend of liberty will not be much dejected; for though tyrants and despotism will assuredly vanish before the light of reason, yet freedom and the people will be eternal. From an enemy it is lawful to hear the words of truth; and he who was destined to assist in the lesson which the French have just received, has informed them, that though individuals often escape the vengeance of distributive justice, yet Providence takes too great care of the happiness of the world, to suffer national crimes to pass unpunished. Whoever are the agents of despotism, kings or senators, the exercise of it is always detestable; and whether freemen are compelled to be slaves, or an enslaved people compelled, contrary to their habitudes, to be free, the compulsion is tyranny, though there may be a considerable distinction in the motives of the tyrants. The pernicious effects of individual despotism, under any name, on the happiness and well-being of society, have long been the theme, and justly so, of every declaimer on the happiness which results from the government of the people; and when the people, by the means of well-organized agents, are the governors, the event justifies the theme.

The United States, without any of those inequalities of conditions which the governors of almost every other country think necessary for the existence of society, have shewn that it can exist much more wisely and happily than with what they deem those

those incumbrances; and France, with ideas even more enlarged, and philosophy more liberal, had the means placed in her hands, of extending this knowledge to the rest of the world; but she has, fortunately for the interests of other tyrants, mistaken the means, and discovered that despotism may change its form, but that its nature is continually the same.

Irritated against these betrayers of the sacred deposit entrusted to their care, the friend of liberty, who regards it only as it becomes the instrument of happiness and order, ~~may not always make just allowances~~ for the errors and crimes against it, into which the constituted powers of France have been led and compelled. Fortunately for its more extensive influence by better means, she has been driven by force to measure back all the steps she advanced from the wise and rational system, which in less prosperous times she had prescribed herself; and this reverse will be worth to her a thousand homilies; for though she has not used her prosperity well, it is to be hoped that adversity will not smite her a second time in vain. Whilst her cause was just, she triumphed; for no cause could be more just and honourable, than that which forced her to draw her sword; and whilst she offered brotherhood and independence to the subjects of those tyrants who had invaded her territory, she acted generously and nobly; but when dazzled by the splendour of her victories, and confident in her own force, she commanded where she promised support, and enslaved where she had offered independence—she became the tyrant in her turn—and the friend of liberty, true to his principles, equally rejoices in her defeat.

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Of defeat she has received sufficient to answer the purposes of chastisement to those who wish her repentance and reform; and humiliation enough to gratify any moderate wishes of enmity and revenge to those who do not entirely wish her destruction.

A few months since, a short space of time raised her to a point, where her most ardent fancy, at the preceding moment, could scarcely have carried her: a shorter space has brought her into circumstances more dreadful than she has ever yet experienced. Instead of liberty spreading her banners over every country in Europe, of which the independence of the adjoining states and the deliverance of Holland, were to have been the auspices; the French are once more compelled to seek refuge in their own fortified places, and protect themselves again from the ravages of the invaders. Who, but the ardent mind, that, even against hope, remains convinced that no designs formed against liberty can eventually prosper, but would have considered himself as reading the last page of this romance of the republic, when he beheld the state of desolation which lately seemed to have overspread it.

The disgraceful abandonment of the fertile provinces, united, and about to be united, as integrant parts of the territory, with all the free establishments formed, and the authorities they had constituted, left at the disposal of their former despots, in whom mercy would now be a double virtue—the retreat from Holland, of whose conquest and alliance, according to the mode lately prescribed, they had made themselves secure—two consecutive defeats in arranged battles, where, according to the general's report, the French soldiers were first cowards, and then

then became robbers—the desertion of this general, and all that was brave in his army, to place himself with his troops under the protection of the enemy, whom he had heretofore fought and conquered—a civil war raging in the country, so formidable, that at one moment the success of the disaffected was more than possible—the minister who directed that department on which depended the safety of the republic, taken prisoner with the members of the legislative power, deputed for its greater security; and this last power, in almost all its parts, ~~so divided and ferocious against each other,~~ that it was become an object of contempt to the lowest of the people. Add also, that to this revolted army, in whom the nation had reposed its trust, there were three or four other hostile armies, each of equal magnitude, ready to pour in their whole force on the country; whilst three other formidable powers, hitherto neutral, had now joined in league, and armed in concert against it.

Such, at one moment, appeared the state of France, and to this dreadful condition did she seem reduced. We are too near the events to consider them with coolness or impartiality; and if you listen to the reports of others, there is such a war of opinion, and indeed so great a contradiction as to facts, that it is impossible at present to trace any true or even probable history of the causes of such an inundation of distress. If you ask the men of the Mountain, they tell you, that the moderate party (for epithets of ordinary virtue, in these days of fury and effervescence, are names for crimes) are in league with the general who betrayed them, and secretly rejoice in the destruction of liberty. These Moderés, in whom we personally know there exists as much honour, as high a spirit of freedom,

as great extent of understanding, as ardent wishes for the happiness of mankind, and indefatigable perseverance in labouring to effect it, as can dwell in the bosom of the purest patriotism, and who, if France is not destined to be lost, will prove at length its saviours, are branded by these illuminated Jacobins as traitors and conspirators against their country. Contempt, the refuge of great minds against calumny, was too passive an instrument in these times to shield them against the effect of such imputations. These Moderés have accepted the challenge, and answered the accusation; and such was the force of their reasoning, the proofs of their innocence, and the conviction of those before whom they pleaded, that they were fully acquitted in the minds of all who heard them. The exhibition which, in their own justification, they made of the conduct of their accusers, afforded every moral evidence of their being guilty of the late outrages that have been committed in Paris, of exciting the people to revolt and assassination; of being concerned with that faction which, by the means of those disorders, had hoped to effect an overthrow of the government, and raise a dictator on its ruins, of whose power they were to partake: and so strong was the conviction in one instance, that the man who stands forth as the general denunciator, who is the abhorrence of the good, the terror of the weak, and the contempt of the wise, has been ordered by the Convention to be dragged to the bar of the formidable tribunal, which has lately been erected for the judgment of treasonable crimes.

This vote of the Convention the Jacobins could not controul, though it was their president who was the victim! But Marat has fled for refuge to his cavern, to elude the hand of justice; and well
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would that patriot deserve of his country, who should roll against its entrance, a stone which no force should be able to remove, that society might remain disburthened of the monster. His eventual triumph, both over law and justice, would be in the order of the day, since his associates in crime are active and industrious; whilst the members of the Convention are too divided, and observe so little ceremony in shewing it, that they had not only lost confidence in each other, but appear also to have lessened considerably that of the people. So conscious are they of this defection, that the wisest amongst them have already moved, for the change or dissolution of the present Convention; and when some principles of the new constitution are established, which are of the highest importance, it is not improbable but an appeal will be made to the nation, to constitute other powers, as the present seem incapable of defending the state, or directing its concerns. If this senatorial discord has been the means of desolating the republic without, it has not had a less fatal effect in deranging it within. For, though we have not to complain of any horrors like those of September; though, except in those departments where a rebellion has been excited by priests and emigrants returned for that purpose, the most perfect tranquillity and good order are established; though at Paris, the ordinary seat of all turbulence and disorder, no one has fallen since the period just mentioned by the dagger of the assassin, except St. Fargeau, a deputy of the Mountain, who was murdered by a royalist; and though no open violence has taken place but a few hours outrage against monopolists, which was soon crushed by the magistrates; yet, in the contest which has ensued between the opposite parties, the one employed

ployed in securing the power of which they were in possession, and the other in endeavouring to wrest it from them, the concerns of the state have been altogether neglected, except where it was likely to discover a new enemy; and no provision made for the day of difficulty, which they knew was approaching, and inevitable. If the history of the close of the campaign, as contained in Dumourier's correspondence with the minister of war, be genuine, we shall be less surprised at the events of the present moment; but we shall wonder at the gigantic folly of those more immediately directing the affairs of the republic, who, whilst they were suffering their army to remain in a state of distress and misery, so as to render them incapable of any farther progress against an enemy encamped before them, were issuing mandates in the form of decrees, not only offering freedom to the rest of the world, but insisting on their acceptance of the proffered favour, which this desolated army was commissioned to enforce. In the decree which was passed with fatal enthusiasm on the fifteenth of December, we find, written in characters now rendered perfectly legible, the origin of almost all those evils, to which a thoughtless effusion of the preceding month was the ill-omened preface.—Decrees which were so contrary to the great principles hitherto laid down of seeking no addition of territory by conquest, but soliciting only the alliance and friendship of all free men throughout all the world, awoke the vigilance of every other power, whose subjects were too weak to assert their privileges, or too habituated to the yoke to wish for any change. The exercise of this revolutionary power, as they named it, was so hostile to every other established authority in Europe, that it was not to be expected
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to remain without animadversion or attack. Formidable leagues were of course combined against it: but, though the French submitted to frequent explanations, yet they were too much elevated at this moment to grant the repeal. A variety of ill offices, which were more or less expressive of resentment and hostile intentions, were manifested by the powers hitherto professedly neutral; and the breach then opened was rendered still wider by the unwise and unnecessary severity which they exercised towards the late king. The condemnation and punishment of this unhappy prince were the signals of attack. To these measures the Jacobin faction had precipitated those of the assembly, whose opinions were more moderate, and whose purposes were less ferocious. Had these last known the effects which this sanguinary act would have produced, not only on their foes, but on those who thought in most things alike with them, in other countries of Europe, they would have more firmly resisted the impetuosity of this Mountain-torrent. There wanted but this act to fill up the measure of hatred; and England, with some confidence, could now declare its intentions. It was with the greatest regret that France beheld us in the list of its foes, whilst she considered herself driven to the declaration; but the reluctance with which it was done appears not only from the previous correspondence between the two states, which is published by order of the Convention, but since, by the accusations made against the diplomatic committee, where it was arranged, and by whom it was reported. It was done, they say, in order to establish peace on a firmer basis; and the invasion of Holland, with a project of another kind, were intended to make a revolution there, and force the English government to acknowledge the
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the republic. Had it succeeded (and, whilst Dumourier was within a few leagues of the Hague, it was not improbable), the objects they sought might have been accomplished. At this point of elevation was France at this moment; and, not only the Convention, but almost every one, expected that the next dispatches would be dated, as Dumourier had promised they should, from Amsterdam.

Whilst Dumourier was marching thither, and the facility with which he carried their strong places promised a speedy termination to his journey, Miranda besieged Maestricht, a strong town belonging to Holland, on the Meuse, which it was supposed would be readily surrendered. He had received instructions to throw only a few shells into the town, and then march on to Nimeguen with twenty-five or thirty thousand men, leaving Maestricht and the Belgic states to the care of the army of the Ardennes, of which Valence had the command. All these brilliant operations were, however, defeated by the advance of a considerable body of Austrian and Prussian troops on these armies, cantoned, in a most disorderly and unmilitary direction, on an extent of nearly fifty miles, and in small divisions, so that they fell an easy prey to the enemy, which had its choice either to kill or capture. Dumourier's presence did not prevent the progress of these troops, flushed with their first success, who came up with him near Tirlemont, when he again gave battle, though he had scarcely two thirds of their force, and they were in possession of all the advantages of ground and position. Dumourier states that this was a victory torn from him by the cowardice of the left wing, commanded by Miranda; but this general, whom I have frequently

quently seen since his arrival in Paris, informs me, and has since made his declaration to the world, that, under the circumstances of the French army, it was impossible to hope for success; and that the immense numbers killed in his division would vindicate their memory against the calumnies of a commander who had given battle so disadvantageously, unnecessarily, and against every principle of the art, and against which he was formally advised by Miranda, who previously shewed him the impossibility of success. From Tirlemont the French retreated to Louvain, where another action ensued, which, though obstinately fought, obliged the French to retreat farther. In these different actions, the slaughter was great on both sides. It ended, however, always to the disadvantage of the retreating armies, who fell back towards Tournay and Mons, which were given up, on condition that the army in Holland should pass into France without interruption. And thus, in a few weeks, the Austrian commander has defeated three armies, forced another to capitulate, recovered the Low Countries, saved Holland, seduced the French generals, and placed himself on the frontiers of the republic.

The events that took place at this moment were not only singular in themselves, but are about to bring to a rapid crisis the object of the present contention. As if it were not enough for France to have lost all that she had gained in the last campaign, with immense stores, amounting to some millions, together with the hopes of pushing farther her victories and triumphs, of which her heated fancy had imagined the acquisition so easy; she becomes incapable at once, not only of the means of farther enterprise, but almost even of the possibility

ment, the machinery of which, he says, was directed "by such leaders as Roberspierre, Marat, and Co." Whilst he was in Paris, the discontent which he expresses in his correspondence from the Low Countries was heightened by what he saw; and so little more satisfaction was given to the minister of war by his presence than his letters, that Pache endeavoured to seduce Miranda from Dumourier's friendship; and wrote him a letter, the meaning of which he understood to be the promotion of himself to the highest rank, if he would assist the Jacobin faction to get rid of Dumourier, who was become too proud or troublesome. This perfidious letter was made known to Dumourier, and served to encrease his resentment. It ended, however, in the dismissal of Pache; and it was hoped that the nomination of Bournonville as his successor would have remedied the numerous evils which this excessively weak or wicked minister had occasioned. The Jacobins, true to their purpose, still pursued him; and, when the defeat at Aix la Chapelle recalled him from Holland, and he found all was lost for conquest, stung by disappointment at the failure of his projects; hunted with implacable fury by these relentless assassins of peace and public order; driven to despair, in beholding, as he imagined, the liberties of his country seized on by these rapacious robbers, more destructive of its interests than Prussian or Austrian legions; he took counsel of the bad thoughts that had long been passing in his mind, and became criminal from the excess of his impatience under calumny and misfortune. This treason, it seems, was concluded on in the very last days of his retreat. though he had meditated it some time before; since, in conversation with Miranda, he had frequently thrown out
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observations which not only were expressive of his rage at the factions, but also of his contempt for the nation itself.

To have heard these disaffected discourses without reply or animadversion, would have been to partake in the guilt. Miranda says, that, when Dumourier came to them from Holland, he brought with him a new doctrine, which was altogether opposite to the sentiments he had usually expressed of respect at least for liberty and republicanism. He appeared highly exasperated against the National Convention; but this bad-humour Miranda attributed to the ill success of his undigested plans, which he had always opposed or corrected.

In a letter to the minister of war, dated the fourteenth of February, this general says, that the enterprise into Holland and the siege of Maestricht, which he was ordered to make, appeared to him "astonishing, and very difficult." "I hope, therefore, that, if the success of the plan is not in conformity to our desires and your hopes, that you will have for us the indulgence which an ardent zeal for the service and glory of the country deserves from a free nation," &c.

The warmth of Dumourier's temper, both in war and council, was often checked by the coolness and reflective disposition of others; and he had the good sense to attend to the wisdom that corrected or restrained him. Finding, at length, that all the plans which he had formed were not only impossible to be executed, but were likely to involve the loss of his army in Holland; and that "la seule prestige de sa personne," which his extravagant vanity had hitherto estimated as an host, could operate nothing against the charm of a victorious enemy, who had to remedy the disgrace of the late campaign, and
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regain an extensive country which they had lost he threw aside all reserve, and wrote to the Convention a letter on the twelfth of March, full of reproach and invective, mixed indeed with some severe and wholesome truths ; but which, had it been permitted to be read, would have compelled the Convention to order him to the bar of the house. Of the arrival of this letter, if you remember, we were informed at the moment, and of the prudent resolves of those into whose hands it fell to suppress it : but Dumourier, who had long conceived that the last virtues belonging to the Convention were caution or prudence, had published it in Brabant ; but previously communicated its contents to Miranda, the day after he had sent it to Paris, adding, that he should not be surprised to see a decree of accusation issued against him. From this time he began to ingratiate himself with the soldiers, shewing them the gazettes of the debates of the Jacobins, and enquiring what they thought of the ferocious denunciations against him. When it was represented how unjustifiable were such attempts, and that the army had nothing to do with the private quarrels of individuals, he desisted from this kind of seduction ; but, when the orders arrived for the arrest of the two generals who commanded the advanced post at Aix la Chapelle, he took occasion to ask Miranda, whether, if such an order were issued against him, he would put it in execution ? — He answered, that, as a faithful servant, he should be obliged to obey ; but that this disagreeable duty would not be imposed on him, since General Valence was his superior. It will come precisely to you, added Dumourier ; but the army will not obey it, so you have only to make a proces-verbal of it, and send it back. Afterwards at table he observed,

observed, "that it was absolutely necessary to go to Paris to establish liberty:" and, when he was asked by what means? he answered, with the army; and what to do? to establish liberty!—The remedy is worse than the disease; and certainly I would hinder you if I could.—Then you would fight against me? That is very possible, if you fight against liberty.—Very well, you would enact then Labienus.—Labienus or Cato, you will always find me on the side of the republic, &c.

There the conversation ended, which I give you as the first expression of the project he had conceived. Finding Miranda ill disposed to second his designs, and become a Cethegus, he became reserved towards him, and attached himself with greater assiduity to cultivate the friendship of the two other commanders, with whom he frequently communicated, and who became at last his constant associates. Of this Miranda took little notice; but, when Dumourier issued his proclamations, reflecting infamy and dishonour on the troops, whilst the error was all his own, he remonstrated with him on the absurdity and injustice of the charge; adding, that he would not suffer the nation to remain in ignorance, how and by whom so many brave men had been uselessly sacrificed; and that, on their arrival at Tournay, which would probably be the next day, he would ask his permission to go to Paris for a few days.—Dumourier had no objection to grant it; for he had then in his pocket a mandate of arrest, or an order from the council calling Miranda to the bar of the Convention. After remonstrating with Dumourier on the perfidy of his conduct, in suffering him to remain ignorant of his order for three days, during which a cannon-shot might have taken from him the means
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of justifying himself against the charges which were brought; for it was his conduct at Maestricht which had caused the order; he came to Paris, where, though he acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the committee, before whom he underwent a long examination; and, though expressly justified by the report made to the Convention, yet, according to the usual inconsequence of their proceedings, he was ordered to take his trial at the bar of their new tribunal. But the committee of public safety and the executive council are so convinced of his innocence, that they have not even put the seals on his papers, or himself under arrest.

At Tournay the arrival of Jacobin commissaries brought the projects of Dumourier to their full maturity. All that passed, having been recorded in the Convention, becomes history. But great doubts remain whether these commissaries, who are, it seems, men of no great confidence, have related the whole, or more than the truth; since it is asserted, that their proces-verbal was arranged in Paris. The seizure of the members of the Convention and the minister of war at the camp of Maulde, and the delivery of them into the hands of the enemy—the subsequent desertion of Dumourier, with the two other commanders, put the treason beyond all possibility of doubt; and even those who felt with Dumourier the outrages he had received; who justified his resentment, and who would have beheld, without much regret, an exemplary punishment inflicted on the execrable anarchists, who had thus driven him to the border of treason, could not but express their lively abhorrence of his crimes. But the part that Dumourier had to act was difficult. Had he resigned the command

command when he entered the French territory, which he ought if disgusted to have done, where could he have retired?—Not to Paris; for he conceived his head too precious, as he himself observes, to be carried to the scaffold; and there he supposed it would be borne, through the fury of an enraged populace, headed by infuriated Jacobins—not a solitary emigrant to the enemy, of whose perfidy La Fayette's melancholy history was an ill-omened presage of what he had to expect from their mercy; and the hazard of passing into any neutral state was too great to hope any probability of success. He therefore formed the desperate and dishonourable plan of making his desertion to the enemy more acceptable by betraying his trust to its very extent.—But his army, more virtuous than their chief, when they discovered his intention, refused to be accomplices in his crime. This was an event which Dumourier had not expected. Of the troops of the line he had thought himself secure; for he was too well acquainted with the rigid virtue of the volunteers to hope any thing from their assistance. To these last he had always of late given the post of danger; and, though many thousands had lately fallen at their post, he had branded them all as cowards; whilst others, who had escaped the honourable fate of their companions, he disorganized, and then stigmatized to the Convention as robbers. His army, thus purged from patriotism, he thought fully equal to the criminality of his designs; and he expected, that, as Pompey, Cæsar, and Anthony had their different armies, when the republic or liberty was nothing at Rome; so he imagined that the soldiers he commanded would arrange themselves under a chief, without paying any regard to the cause for which

they fought, or the principles they were to sacrifice. To the honour of human nature, and the triumph of the principles of liberty, he saw his army instantly disband; whilst a few regiments only remained sharers in his guilt. And this was worth a thousand victories: for what fear is there that a people can be enslaved, when those who have been in the habitude of offering their lives at the command of others, when success was hopeless, and the utility of the sacrifice doubtful, start up with horror at the prospect of dishonour; and, though disgusted with the treatment they had lately received in recompense of their services, from the republic, fly to its cause as an asylum from crime.

But, whilst we contemplate this event in the history of the revolution with enthusiasm, we cannot help returning to the darker side of the scene, and tempering our admiration with profound reflexions on the instability of human things, when we see one general, lately covered with glory, the conqueror of formidable hosts, and the shield of his country; to whom Europe looked up with wonder, and whose name alone was dreadful; now blinded by revenge, and seduced by ambition, betray the country which he had saved, and fly for protection to the enemies whom he had conquered—another, with the wounds yet bleeding which he had received in defence of the republic, unite his cause to that of the traitor——whilst a third, the adopted child of the revolution, which had dethroned his family, joins himself to the protectors of this family against the revolution, to which he owed his all; in whose cause he has already gathered so many laurels, and to whose service he had solemnly consecrated his life.

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What were the motives that influenced these men to the commission of deeds which the common consent of all nations have marked with obloquy and disgrace, it would be very difficult, notwithstanding the danger of the existing circumstances, to divine. Had it been demanded of me to name the man, where the purest principles of patriotism would have dictated the most virtuous conduct, and where the noblest sacrifices would have been made to liberty; had it been the sacrifice of country—of fortune—friends—of all that renders life agreeable or makes existence a blessing—I should not have hesitated, from the intimate and confidential intercourse which I have had with this young man, to have placed all that I hold most valuable on his inflexible virtue; for I have witnessed moments in his life when that virtue was put to the severest proof. Of the reasons that influenced his conduct we are yet uncertain. In an evil hour seduced by Dumourier, and by a stratagem so base that as yet I dare not hazard the recital; taught to believe, as his intercepted letters prove, that the liberties of his country no longer existed; that anarchy and faction had destroyed the fair fabric which the revolution had reared; and that it might be an act of virtue to proceed to the extirpation of those usurping and vulgar tyrants; without considering that the remedy was fatal, whilst the disease could be but for a moment; and that, though violence might triumph for a season, its reign must necessarily be short: he suffered himself to be deprived of his honour and his fame.

Of Dumourier, though I have long understood that his life has been a system of intrigue, and vanity his ruling passion; yet I am persuaded that
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the incessant denunciations of premeditated treasons, hurled against him by the assassins of reputation at Paris, had no foundation in truth.—I mark in his correspondence the progress of his crimes; and I believe, that, previously to the fatal event of Aix la Chapelle, though his soul was embittered by calumny and disappointment, it was free from the actual intention of guilt. I will not dissemble, that, before this event, whilst he was yet in Paris, and planning the campaign, viewing the influence of those unprincipled men, whose triumph became unbounded at the death of the king, “from which melancholy catastrophe,” says Dumourier, “I date the whole world our enemy;” that, like the profligate mentioned by Valerius, “*Peregrinatus est in nequitia.*” But his intention was not there to abide. When this correspondence is published (which for prudential reasons is delayed) it will appear to the world, that of this treason the detested faction of the Mountain and the Jacobins have been the original authors; and Dumourier will stand half acquitted to his injured country.

But of this man what can we at present decide? We are not, indeed, the impartial judges before whose tribunal he is to be brought. Posterity will judge him more aright, and appreciate his motives and his crimes. Had he waited till this moment, he might have witnessed his complete triumph, notwithstanding his misfortunes, over the faction that has hunted him to his ruin; and might have contributed to secure the blessings of liberty to his country, on a basis more firm and exalted than victory or foreign conquests. If prevented in his criminal design of marching to Paris, he failed in the probable engagement he has made with his
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new allies, who will regard him only as a traitor, when they see his impotence; and throw him by as useless, since no confidence can be reposed——we may then mourn over the ruins of his greatness; but we cannot help exclaiming with the poet:

- “ Oh! lost alike to action and repose,
- “ With all that habit of familiar fame!
- “ Sold to the mockery of relentless foes,
- “ And doom’d t’ exhaust the dregs of life in shame;
- “ To act, with burning brow and throbbing heart,
- “ A poor deserter’s dull exploded part;
- “ To slight the favour thou canst hope no more,
- “ Renounce the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind;
- “ Charge thy own lightness on thy country’s mind,
- “ And from her voice appeal to each tame foreign shore.”

It is difficult to say what the consequence of the present disorganization will be. The troops who have taken the side of the republic are dispersed in various garrisons; and there seems to be no army at present to prevent the incursions of the enemy. But, if one might judge from the tranquillity that reigns throughout the republic, and even in Paris, it would never be supposed that war was at their gates: and this tranquillity and order, though it now and then will be interrupted, should serve to convince the enemy that the people of this country are invincible. The provinces, except where fanaticism had kindled the torch of civil discord, now nearly extinguished, enjoy all the blessings that liberty can give; and it is only in great towns, from whence the intrigues of the old government are not yet banished, and the different classes retain too many of their former prejudices to harmonize well together, that there is yet occasional disorder. Though the present opposition to the invading armies

mies on the north be not yet very formidable, the departments have in general furnished more than their contingent.

It is to be hoped that this union of sentiment will have some influence on those of the belligerent powers, and lead them to considerations of peace. But, whatever be the event of the present struggles, the friends of liberty in France have little cause for dejection at this seeming reverse. It was, indeed, wanting to bring them back to their original system, from which the French have so unhappily strayed. Their minds were yet too young in freedom to appreciate its blessings aright; and they were yet to know that the triumphs of liberty are scarcely ever those of the sword.

A new representation will profit by the errors of the present; and, repealing those decrees so hostile to the peace of other countries, may offer or accept terms of peace honourable to every party, and for the stability of which the principles originally avowed by the French will serve as the basis. The French will demand what is their undoubted right, the independence of the republic, and the power of arranging their own concerns; and they also have received a sufficient lesson to prevent them from ever mingling in the concerns of others. The evacuation of Holland and of Brabant takes from the English every pretence of war. The Prussian has repaired the dishonour of his last campaign; and will not be anxious to add France an ally to Austria. This last power has nothing more to fear from the French attempting their revolutionary principles in the Low Countries, where superstition and ignorance are too deeply rooted, and saints and monkery too much adored to admit any better faith. Grown wise by experience, they will learn to establish
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among themselves that order and harmony which is the best evidence of the value of liberty; and will relax from those severe and sanguinary laws which have driven into exile, with the contemptible and the base, those also who had no crime but error in judgment, and no treason but defect of courage or imbecility of mind. The provocation of the French to this abandonment of their principles was unquestionably great.—The Austrian was plotting their destruction with the court; and the Prussian had wantonly joined in the quarrel. These came to establish despotism in a state that had become free: the French in return invaded their territories, to establish liberty in states that were enslaved.—The events of the two last months have proved that both have miscalculated; and with the parties the most interested the whole world has been deceived.

LETTER XI.

Paris, May 7,
Second Year of the Republic.

IT is not the least singular circumstance in this revolution, that when it has appeared near its close, from the effects of the various treasons to which it has been exposed, the danger has produced an exertion not only sufficient to counterbalance the evil intended, but excited a temporary ardour capable of triumphing over every seeming impossibility. It was thus that in the middle of September, when the

the fears and hopes of seeing the Prussians in Paris became general, the enemy having already attained half the way; that six weeks had not elapsed before the French were in possession of Brabant. The republic seemed tottering from its base a few days since, when the general, and it was feared the army, had deserted to the Austrians: the danger has again aroused them, and scarcely will another month pass by ere there appear a million of men in arms. This ardour sinks into indifference when the danger is no longer pressing; and when this indifference again brings them into danger, as it happened in their defeat, and expulsion from the Low Countries, the ardour is again renewed. Those who are unacquainted with this part of their character would reasonably suppose, that such defeats and distresses would prove fatal; and I observe in the accounts given of the public opinion of other countries, that the winding up of this extraordinary drama is daily expected. But we flatter ourselves too readily. As yet the strong man has been bound only "with green withes and new cords, and his hair woven with the web;" for we behold him aroused from his sleep only to shake his locks, each time becoming more invincible; and we have not yet had the address to find out where his real strength lies, which it seems we are only taking measures to increase. But let us suppose it discovered, though to me the secret is impenetrable, the comparison will hold even to the catastrophe: for if the present coalition of all the powers of Europe succeed, to betray or overwhelm the French, the principle cannot die; and at the appointed time, if the struggle should crush themselves with their tyrants, their country and children will be free. These events, however, seem highly improbable; for the numerous treasons of which they have so narrowly escaped

escaped being the victims, have not only given them a habit of ferocious caution, but inspired an enthusiastic courage, which always keeps pace with the magnitude of the danger.

France, according to the old calculation, numbers twenty-six millions of inhabitants; but from the data of Necker, the truth of which is acknowledged, Dr. Price's calculation raises them to thirty millions: of these a fifth part are capable of bearing arms; and, to entitle them to the privileges of active citizens, the law enjoins it. For the purposes of agriculture and manufactures, in which the women of this country are equally employed with the men, we will remit half the number of this fifth part, which leaves three millions of able and hardy warriors, fitted for any enterprise. Of these the danger of the country will soon call one million into actual service, who will be placed in various parts of the republic, to await the foe, or invade their territories. If on the northern and eastern side, the Austrian, Hollander, Hessian, Prussian, and the tribes of German princes pour in their forces; there are three hundred thousand men, and sixty strongly fortified places, and some apparently impregnable, to arrest their progress. An army in the South is pursuing the Sardinian troops on their own soil; while the Alps, the neutrality of the Swiss, and another army, serve as barriers to other invasions. If the whole force of Spain is brought to over-run the country adjacent to their own territory, as they are attempting; two armies and the Pyrenees are full securities to any effectual hostilities on that side. If descents are intended by the naval powers; three armies, and none of these are Bayes's troops in ambush, are stationed along the coasts in all possible places of an attack; while two other armies, making the number thirteen,

teen, are placed in the center, to keep internal order, and serve as depots for recruitment and occasional service. If it were possible for them to act prudently, not a ship of the line should stray beyond the harbour. This bulwark of our own country, the fleet, has a superiority which ought to terrify, and joined by those of other powers, which double the number, an attempt at competition would be madness: but this is no reason with the French why it should not be attempted. When led to declare war against us, there was so much affected mystery in the transaction, that any who did not know them would have concluded that our commerce was annihilated, from the supposed immensity of their preparations.

There was nothing, it seems, of which they thought less, if one may judge from the bureau of the marine; unless they dreamed, like Dumourier on some other occasion, that the fleets and commerce of England would be destroyed—"Par la seule prestige de leur personne." As yet their hostilities against us have been so trivial, and unless roused by some great calamity on that side, will continue so, that the merchant may walk the 'Change without much alarm, and the insurer become wealthy. Under the torpid influence of their late calculating and mathematical minister, who had a modesty at least which few ministers at this day possess, of confessing his inequality to the office, every thing that concerned the marine seemed to have acquired a retrograde motion. They tell us now of their formidable force; but they cannot be formidable against so vast a superiority as ours, and naval skill so pre-eminent. I will grant much to enthusiasm; but the sea is not the element for the display of the enthusiasm of the present day; and if their plan be not

not differently arranged, nothing but defeat and disaster can attend them.

I scarcely know whether any of the more immediate directors of the republic are acquainted with marine affairs, or whether, from their previous habits and occupations, they can have had the slightest experience in naval concerns: but we know how small a portion of knowledge is necessary to regulate the affairs of the world; and if one may judge from other circumstances, they trust much to accident and events; and it must be confessed that the preponderance hitherto has been greatly in their favour.

Of their land forces, though their discipline and skill be not equal to the enthusiasm, yet the military village amusement for these four years past, has prepared them for more serious employment; and this is a point on which a friend to the independence of Europe would fix his attention. It is impossible for any government to arm its subjects as France has armed her citizens, because however mild the administration of that government might be, the possession of so much power in the people would necessarily lead to its abuse. If you increase the force you also increase the danger, like certain powers in physics—which become useless or fatal beyond their proper point. It becomes therefore dangerous to say nothing of the expence, to arm the people, except in certain classes of the community: but it happens unfortunately, that those whom it might be prudent and less hazardous to entrust with power, are, from the nature of their attachment to the governments they live under, not the best fitted to give it much military protection. With France the case is different; she calls on every citizen to arm, and where arms can be borne,

borne, implicit obedience to the law is required. Where nothing is to be gained by insurrection, little is to be feared from any abuse of this power; for where men are equal in their rights, the exercise of any authority not given by the people is the only thing to be resisted. The coalition of almost all the forces of Europe, against France, had at first a menacing and terrific aspect; but if there remain those who think that her cause is still the cause of liberty, they may rest satisfied, that she stands yet invincible against unjust and barbarous oppression.

Naturalists tell us, that the specific muscular force of a little animal, proverbial for its smallness and agility, is so many thousand times greater than that of a man, that, were it capable of attaining the same magnitude, its power would become irresistible. That power this country has at present the appearance of attaining. If the menace of the Prussian manifesto provoked the slight punishment of its inconsiderate framer, this combination of kings only serves to awaken them to a greater exertion.—What was predicted is now verifying: the merchant is laying aside his commerce and becoming the owner only of privateers; the proprietor and farmer, assisted by recent decrees of the legislature, are carrying plenty to the markets; the citizen is preparing to march like a Roman soldier, not only with arms, but with his provision for a given time, and such has already happened in a southern department, an eighty-fifth part of the republic, where five millions of money, and, assisted by their neighbours, forty thousand men were raised in a few days, to repel an unexpected attack. Already is the great family of Frenchmen composing but one army, and France becoming but one

one vast camp, where the whole talk is of war, where every thing tends to war, where all labour, save that of necessary supplies for immediate existence, has war for its ultimate object.—Already, by simple and frugal habits, have they begun to prepare themselves for reverses and misfortunes, and the act only of preparation will fortify their minds against any sinister event. The hostile powers are but their masters, training them to discipline by terror and threatenings; but of this these powers are not sufficiently aware. A few months of actual service, added to the preparation already made, makes a Frenchman a soldier! We have seen it in America!—The million now raised will not be the million of the next campaign; they will return to their homes, a part at least, and be replaced by their brethren in arms. Whilst this force is used for the purposes of self-defence, Frenchmen, returned from the error into which they had been led, when tempted by success to wander from principle, will find advocates in every generous mind; and as the “threatened crusade of ruffian despots” (against which a celebrated writer assuredly unsuspected of republican opinions has hurled the force of unparalleled eloquence and virtuous indignation) is not only attempted but actually put into execution, the intervening circumstances of horror which criminate the nation only as they are yet unpunished (for in those atrocious deeds the nation had no concern), will not have changed that sentiment which considers the present attack an “outrageous infringement on the laws of nations, and a savage conspiracy against the written and unwritten rights of man.”

But, if we might adventure in these eventful days to look beyond the present moment, and brave the
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the ridicule of prophecy, "the black and lowering storm which threatens soon to overspread the face of all Europe, and overwhelm in one common ruin every loose remnant and every faint vestige of liberty," though it may constitute a new, will no longer form a tremendous spectacle.—However novel in theory and pernicious in practice may be the counsels of those sanguinary fanatics, who have unblushingly and unfeelingly provoked the unsparing sword of foreign potentates, to point it, without any other end than tyranny, against the bosoms of Frenchmen, the resistance to this tyranny will be as novel as the attack, and the eventual triumph over the invaders will be as signal as this projected proscription.

It cannot be dissembled, that, however disgusted the inhabitants of other countries may be with French politics, the principles on which Frenchmen profess to act are received as speculative truths with nearly a general assent. If their late misfortunes have rendered them sufficiently wise—if the constitution about to be framed restore internal order, and assure individual liberty and protection, which hangs at present on the loose will of society alone, the efforts of all Europe will not shake them from their purpose. The continuance of these efforts may, however, produce another effect, and present a spectacle equally new and tremendous to tyranny, as that which has lately menaced the cause of general freedom. If this struggle continue long, Frenchmen will become strong in proportion as their adversaries become weak; and, losing that habit of indulgence and luxury, which courts and aristocratical manners have produced amongst them, they not only will become soldiers of defence, but soon grow into warriors of hardy attack.

attack. Without offending against the principles they have originally laid down; since an invasion of an enemy's territory is but a defence of their own, thus forced into martial habits, they may become incapable of resisting the impulse. Acting still on the defensive we may see them, like the northern nations in the sixth century, overspreading Europe; not in contemptible imitation of those ferocious robbers, adding scraps of country to their own, in the silly spirit of puerile fraternization; but avenging their wrongs in the overthrow of their oppressors; and, after having taken the price of war, leave the subjects of the driven tyrants to return again under the yoke, or form an independent government for themselves.

This may be a waking dream: but, if the princes were wise, they would seek a pretence for peace; and, by their removal from the territory, call on the French in the language of Anchises:

“ Ne, pueri! ne tanta animis affuescite bella!”

Æneid. lib. vi.

The friend of humanity indulges the hope, that this iron scourge of war may yet be suspended. Considerations of amicable adjustment, they say, have already taken place. The Prince of Cobourg, like his predecessor the Duke of Brunswick, has sent before him his manifesto in the form of propositions, but in a style altogether dissimilar. To judge from this and a few other incidents, we may hope that the world is in a state of improvement when it was least expected. Brunswick invaded, and La Fayette betrayed, eight months since, to overthrow the last constitution, because it was too free. The prince of Cobourg and Dumourier invade and betray at present, to establish

lish that constitution, because they judge it to be just free enough; and, if I am rightly informed, the last manifesto which was received does not insist on royalty making a component part; being unexceptionable in most other points, but that which is of the first moment, namely, that France can never permit any foreign authority to mix in her internal concerns.

This acknowledgment of the right of the people to have formed that constitution (though it be considered of very trivial importance by Frenchmen whether the coalesced powers acknowledge it or not) will surely provoke the ire of Mr. Burke, who considers the making or mending of constitutions as so dangerous an employment, that our forefathers, scared at the monument they had raised to freedom, in the revolution attempted a century since, vowed and swore, for themselves and their children's children, according to this historian, never to undertake such uncouth and pestilential projects again. But if the orator, hearing of this concession to rebels and regicides, should lift up his iron voice at the treason of Cobourg against "the rights of kings," thus condescending to offer propositions to caitiffs who should "be pursued only with the lash of the beadle," like the revolted slaves of Syracuse—What Deity can he invoke?—

Quisquis erit ille Deorum?

Who shall give him the power of language or lungs for utterance, when he learns the decision of the chiefs united in the cause of royalty, against one whose claims on their protection, for her rank, as well as her misfortunes, should have entitled her to every sentiment of respect, and every feeling of humanity and pity? One does not look for much heroism,

heroism, or even any considerable exertion of magnanimity from those chiefs: the cause they have undertaken inspires neither: and therefore it was very much in the order of the day at that time, in Brabant, to take all the advantages which traitors or treason could furnish. Accordingly the deputies of the Convention were delivered into the hands of the Austrians by Dumourier; and Cobourg sent them prisoners to Maerficht. One does not enquire into the right, of committing this offence against the law of nations. The morality or justice of the events that are taking place are no topics of consideration; but it would have been some proof of Cobourg's sincerity, when he protested his admiration of the French, and his solicitude for their friendship, to have given some evidence in refusing to become an accomplice in this unlawful deed. Livy tells us, that, when the pedagogue of Fescinium betrayed the sons of the principal inhabitants into the power of Camillus, who was besieging the place; the dictator, struck with abhorrence at the treachery, sent him back, stripped and bound, to the parents of those boys, who were each furnished with rods to punish him in the conveyance. His generosity was not unrewarded. And had Cobourg acted thus, it might have been fatal to the liberty of France. But who would expect to find a Camillus in Cobourg *?

VOL. II.

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Several

* Minellius, in his Commentary on the 12th ode of the first book of Horace, furnishes a single incident in which there is some co-incidence. I quote it for the singularity:—

“ L. F. Camillus, Româ a Gallis Senonibus captâ, Gallis in auro appendendo jam occupatis, cum exercitu intervenit, eosque, sexto post Romam captam mense, ex Italiâ expulsit.”

Thus translated:

“ The Prince of Cobourg, when Brussels was taken by the fraternizing Frenchmen, who were in the act of shewing their brotherhood

Several propositions had been made for the recovery of those commissaries; but none had succeeded. Some princes, prisoners of war, were ordered into stricter confinement as hostages; but princes are common in Germany, and their fate had little to interest the remainder of the cast. The depot of deputies was thought too valuable to be thus cheapened; and the committee of public safety were of the same opinion; but, presuming on the sincerity of the attachment to royalty, for which the destruction of thousands was then meditating, they imagined it might be considered as an equivalent, if they offered the queen in exchange for those captives. I had little doubt at the time the offer was made, but that it would have been thankfully accepted; and rejoiced that this unhappy woman was at length assured of her escape from the horrors which the Mountain savages had projected, and even prepared, at the fitted moment, to put into execution against her.

Alas! not to France alone is the day of calculation peculiar—not only from this heretofore gallant country is the age of chivalry fled—If seventeen years ago “ten thousand swords would have leapt from their scabbards to avenge a look of insult offered to this morning star, just lighting on the orb, full of life, and splendour and joy”—what, in the essence of chivalry collected from all nations, ought to have been the transport when it was proposed, not with the ardour of courtly passion to fall prostrate before this splendid luminary, but to mourn
over

brotherhood by robbing the churches and plundering the inhabitants, under the protection of commissaries of the Convention, came on them at Aix la Chapelle with his army, and drove them out of Brabant, after they had been in possession of Brussels nearly six months.

over it, shorn of its beams; not to revenge an imaginary look of insult, but to relieve from deep and substantial distress; not to draw the fantastic sword, but to strike off the chains that had entered her soul! Oh! could the orator have searched the world around for his "nation of cavaliers," here would he have rested his weary foot in surety—nor would it have entered his imagination, that a queen of France could, even in these inglorious days, have been put into competition by them with Conventional missionaries—the country "curate," and the "endless promoter of village war and vexation," the provincial attorney? Nor would he ever dream of awakening from this delightful vision, to contemplate it thus dishonoured by such vulgar uncouth realities. These princes, on whom, abandoned by the rest of the world, she might have cast an imploring eye with the hope of succour; on whom she had so many claims for assistance, from family connection and personal attachment, to say nothing of royal sympathies, or the commendable spirit of chivalry, that one might have expected the cause of so illustrious a sufferer would have revived amongst them, have rejected this offer with the cool commercial contempt of tutored savages, who, grown too wise to exchange their valuable commodities for the baubles and trinkets of European dealers, demand wares more like the real worth.

The committee have been disappointed in this negociation. They knew, indeed, the value of the exchange on both sides; but they did not suspect that the princes were nearly as intelligent in this sort of traffic as themselves: for, though royalty may yet be in some estimation amongst these chiefs, yet a queen, and probably the remains of the whole royal family, are not the price of a mi-

nister and four commissaries, taken from amidst the plundering, confiscating (I forget the orator's other epithets) democracy, pure then, even in his eyes, compared with the atrocious blazon of their newly committed crimes.

My intention in relating this anecdote was only to have noticed the change of opinion taking place in the world, with respect to the progressive and relative value of these heretofore highly estimated objects, amongst those even who stand forth their avowed defenders. It cannot be suspected, that, in bringing to your remembrance any of Mr. Burke's extravagancies, I meant to reflect with the slightest irreverence on misfortune; to which, indeed, the possession of all Mr. Burke's wit and eloquence (and no one has ever deemed more highly of them than myself) would never tempt me: but who can help lamenting that his romance on the French revolution should have been productive of so wide an evil? It may flatter the vanity of this fanciful writer, to know that his work has been studied by queens, and kings, and princes, and cavaliers; but this vanity will be tempered with some slight remorse, when he is assured that he is often cursed by these deluded victims, as one amongst the authors of their misfortunes. To have injured the cause he meant to defend was not in his intention: yet such unhappily has been the effect, which I do not state from idle report, since many in the unfortunate class of sufferers from the savage laws of national banishment, have given me repeated instances of the delusion. Of this delusion I have myself too often witnessed the fatal consequences; and my heart has not been so steeled with democracy, but that I have hazarded much in defence of these unhappy exiles. When I contemplate this crowd

crowd of individual distresses, the prospect of the better age seems too much dimmed, surveyed through this thick atmosphere of evil, to offer much delight; and one sickens at the mass of intermediate calamity, though one has the assurance of the philosophic poet*, peculiarly applicable to the present circumstances; and that also of authority which cannot err, that evil as well as good is of divine original, and permitted only for the wisest designs.

The last example I have to offer is also interesting to Mr. Burke, as it respects the "Majesty of the Church."—A century ago the spirit of persecution drove from France multitudes of its best and most industrious inhabitants, the Protestants; as the same spirit of fanaticism lately discovered in England by "the savages of Birmingham," against the best informed and most valuable of its citizens, the Dissenters, is likely to promote from thence a similar emigration.

In the history of the revocation of the edict of Nantz, every one remembers the arguments which were urged to obtain it, and the pious exhortations of the reverend confessor who was most instrumental to procure and enforce it. All the leading events of that unhappy and desolating period rushed on my mind a few days since, from the singular contrast of the scene then before me. The Bishop of Calvados was in the honourable list of those proscribed in the insolent petition of the Commune of Paris. In a speech full of wit and eloquence he cleared himself, to the conviction of his accusers,

* Μεγαλὺς, πρὶν ἰδύσθαι, νῦν, θανάτου,

Πολλὰ δὲ πηματα, κεινοπαθὴν

Κ' ἔδει τῶντων, ὅτι μὴ ζῆν.

Sophocl. I believe the Trachiniae
from

from the charges brought against him; one of which, it seems, was the excess of his piety, if one may judge from the style of his defence. The bishop thought himself obliged to offer some apology for his faith. And, though Mr. Burke well knows, notwithstanding his lamentations over the fallen honours of the Church, that one hundred and fifty-one millions of livres are paid annually to those who were and are yet concerned in its support, it would have grieved him sore to have witnessed an instance of such degradation as that of a Catholic bishop apologizing for his belief, in a country lately so Christian, and before the president of the supreme power in Church and State, who happened to be at that time M. La Source, a Protestant priest.

The Convention at this time struck out from their Bill of Rights the article which sanctioned public worship, and from motives the most reverend, for they begin to understand the question. National faith is near its close, so far as it is national. It will first dwindle into administrative and municipal regulation, and it will not be long from thence ere religion will rise to its native dignity, and find support in the energy of its maxims, and the evidence of its truths, from the voluntary protection of an enlightened people; who will acknowledge it as the firmest basis whereon to build their present and future hopes.

Released from the sopperies and corruptions of the church, its tenets then shall be no longer removed from the apprehensions or belief of its votaries, as the philosophic and infidel historian has asserted of our own establishment, the articles of whose faith he represents as yet in this state of removal, though subscribed by their more immediate defenders, with either a sigh or a smile: for the approval
of

of most of the principles of this revolution does not imply an approbation of the means by which they are always carried into effect. It is to be lamented that the principle and the execution are sometimes at variance; yet we are not to condemn the one for the defect of the other. Principles are eternal—circumstances only change.—The good will remain written in brass—the evil will evaporate like water. Ignorance and passion will deny the existence of any possible good; but the denial proves it only to be that of ignorance or passion. When we talk to them of the equal protection given to every member of society by the laws, they shew us the list of emigrant nobility, whose former habits not brooking such equality, have forced them into guilty or voluntary exile.—If we speak to them of the people assuming their rights, and, by means of representation, laying the basis of a free government, they, like Anthony, “shake before our eyes the bloody robe;” and, though we cannot be forced into an approval of tyranny or treason, the exhibition melts us into tears. Like them we start back with horror at the savage Septembriots; and imprecate curses on their heads. Like them we detest the tyranny, and mock the silly menace of forcing the world to be free: but do they, with us, feel the same horror at the first German manifestoes, threatening what these others executed; or make due apology for the ambitious resentment of an injured people, who, under the guise of philosophy and the soft title of affiliation, were running headlong into the tyranny they condemned? Their triumphs would be short did they see how our hearts are torn with anguish at scenes where they only affect sorrow; and they would be disappointed in their purpose of inflicting pain, did they know how
every

every friend of liberty, and the rational principles of the French revolution, partake in their joy, though on grounds widely different, in the effects of the late defeat. Were the tree of liberty planted in France to be torn up by the roots, it has flourished too long not to shake over other countries in the violence of its fall the precious seeds it already bears. The incessant watchfulness of the cultivator to keep from it the wild boars that would root it up, and to frighten away the eagles that would tear its branches, has forced him into a temporary neglect of its own growth. These ill-omened birds have assisted, though with no friendly beak, to crop those sprouts, trespassing on foreign soil, to which they afforded neither fruit nor shade, but which have prevented the necessary supply of both within; from whence, if it be pruned and cultivated aright, the gentle winds of heaven will waft over every country its ripened produce; and, though this may for a time "fall amongst thorns, and in stony places, and the fowls of the air may devour it," yet it will certainly at length find every where "the good ground fitted to receive it; and its produce will be sixty and a hundred fold."

If freedom be a blessing, it must be known by its fruits; for where tumult and anarchy continue to deform, the silent hut of despotism will be deemed the more pleasant abode. But where equal laws, wise instruction, rational faith, and virtuous conduct, constitute order and happiness, all mankind will become worshippers in the Temple of Liberty; whose corners will extend to the farthest ends of the earth, and whose arch will be the vault of Heaven.

LETTER XII. *Christie*

PARIS, March 1793.

MADAM,

TO do justice to the subject of our late conversation, to trace the progress of so vast an event as the French revolution, and to account for the erroneous opinions in England respecting it, is a task to which I am very unequal at present. But if a few hasty remarks on these points shall be acceptable to you, it will give me pleasure to have written them.

With the opinions of other nations I shall not interfere; I shall confine myself to our own country. It was surely natural to have supposed, that a free people would have rejoiced in the freedom of others. It could not have been imagined, that those who had themselves made a long and severe struggle for liberty, would have looked with an evil eye on the efforts of another nation to obtain that same valuable blessing: yet the reverse of this has happened! The revolution of France was from the beginning viewed in a dubious light in England: as it advanced farther, it became more disliked; and in its latter stages, it has been the object of the highest disgust and execration!

I do not speak of the opinions of certain unprincipled statesmen, who regard with pain the prosperity of surrounding nations; and who, in their own, as well as in other countries, are hostile to whatever contributes to the advantage of the

people. Their system has always been, to keep the people in ignorance and debasement, that they might have an apology for denying them power, in the argument that they were unfit to be trusted with it. I do not speak of the lower and ignorant class of the people, whose minds have never been elevated above the old absurd prejudices against Frenchmen, whom they regard as their *natural enemies*. Nor do I speak of the present moment, when the two nations are at war: for on such occasions the passions are excited, and a nation, like an individual, though not sure of being altogether in the right, yet, when attacked, will lose its temper, and abuse its opponent. My remarks shall be confined to the period preceding hostilities, and will refer chiefly to the middling, that is, to the most disinterested and the most judicious class of society.

The HISTORY of the French revolution may be given in a few paragraphs—public abuses were too great, and too inveterate to be remedied by a gradual reform. A revolution was necessary, and in order to bring it about, it was requisite to appeal to the power of the great body of the people. This appeal was made: the people rose in general insurrection, and destroyed the Bastille! The destruction of abuses followed of course. A CONSTITUTION was formed, not surely the best possible, but the best that the circumstances permitted. The great majority of the nation received it with perfect approbation, and the very few enlightened men, who would have preferred a republic, saw so little hope of obtaining it, or of its being permanent when obtained, that they acquiesced in the general opinion, and resolved to wait with patience, till the gradual progress of light and information should prepare

prepare the nation for the complete triumph of principles over prejudice.

Mr. de la Rochefoucauld said to me, "I have no doubt that a republic is the most perfect form of government, but I do not think it would be suitable to France. We are too corrupt to be republicans. I doubt even whether you in England have virtue enough for it. America is the country for republicanism." This idea was not peculiar to Mr. de la Rochefoucauld. Others conceived the minds of the people not to be yet ripe for a republic; and, on the whole, there was a perfect acquiescence in the limited monarchy, formed by the Constituent Assembly.

I wish particularly to direct your attention to this fact, that you may be enabled to judge who were the authors of all the troubles and confusion, that have followed the period of unanimity and peace now described. I shall therefore beg leave to produce a few farther proofs of the decided attachment that reigned amongst all ranks of men to the principles then adopted, and which formed the basis of the constitution completed in 1791.

So universal was the public opinion in favour of the monarchical system, that even when the flight of the king offered the fairest opportunity of establishing a republic; when Brissot contended at the Jacobins, *that the king ought to be tried**—when

Condorcet

* Those who declared that the king ought to be *tried*, did not therefore pronounce that he ought to be *condemned*. That was the question to be examined. But they argued, that his *inviolability* could not exempt him from a trial.

1. Because the *inviolability* of the monarch is inseparably connected with the *responsibility* of his ministers. In every case there must be some one responsible to the nation; otherwise there is no liberty, and the government is a despotism. In the case now alluded

Condorcet argued, in opposition to a common prejudice, that a great and extensive nation was not unfit for the republican form of government—when Thomas Paine and Achille du Chatelet formed a republican society, and began a journal under the title of *Le Republicain*—when, besides all this, the popular societies and the patriots, who influenced the public mind in every part of France, waited with anxiety for the decision of the Assembly, and were prepared by the circumstances to have acquiesced in it, even had it announced the instant abolition of monarchy! The French legislators pardoned the fugitive prince *without a trial*, and preserved the monarchy.

I was then in Paris, and I asked several people what they thought of the conduct of the Assembly. The sudden change of Barnave and others, from violent democracy to royalty, they allowed to be somewhat strange; but they appeared to be pleased with it, and acquiesced heartily in their proceedings! “The French,” said a person to me, “can not do without a king. We have been too long accustomed to have one, and we must have one still, even if he were made of wood!”—Had any one replied “But this inefficient man costs you so dear”—they would have answered, “True, but we must have him to fill the place” and

cluded to, the king acted in a public capacity, of his own accord, and without the knowledge of his ministers. He was therefore liable to be called to account for his conduct like any other public officer.

2. The *inviolability* granted to the king could not be intended but for the protection of the constitution, and was therefore to be limited to that object. The king was inviolable in executing the constitution, but not in endeavouring to destroy it. No constitution can grant to any of its members a power to destroy itself: the very idea of such a thing is an absurdity!

“and keep out intriguers!” Such ideas were so universal, that those who had manifested any approbation of republicanism fell into disrepute, and at length were reduced to total silence. The most enlightened of them, as I have already stated, Condorcet, Brissot, &c. gave up all hopes of the new system; and resolved to wait till the time appointed for the revision of the constitution, when they presumed the progress of reason and information would have prepared the public mind for farther changes.

The constitution was completed, and accepted by the king. Thus far all was well; and the greatest revolution the world had ever seen was to all appearance concluded with the smallest quantity of attending evil. You will remember, that at this period Mr. Burke's declamations about the evils of the French revolution had lost all credit.—Nobody pretended to justify them.—Ah! had that revolution ceased there, or advanced forward afterwards only by the slow and peaceful progress of gentle reform, how happy would it have been for France; how salutary for Europe! But, alas! this golden age of the French revolution was of short duration!

It was a great error in the Constituent Assembly (supposing it possible for them to have avoided it) to have allotted the king so immense a salary as a million and a half sterling a year. Such a sum in France was enormous, and the possession of it put it always in the power of an able prince to corrupt the legislative body. The aristocratic party at the court of Louis the sixteenth, determined to profit by this circumstance, and they well knew, that the very existence of such a civil list would, by whetting expectation, without the actual misuse of it, serve as a powerful engine in favour of royalty.

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This party had ostensibly acquiesced in the constitution: the circumstances required this sacrifice of them, but they had secretly determined on the destruction of it. To effectuate this, they kept up a connection with the emigrant princes, and used all their influence with the king, who being of a character too feeble to be invariably honest, though generally well-meaning, and too weak to be out of the reach of deception, though not entirely without understanding—partly a deceiver, but much more a dupe, was the fittest of all agents to forward their purposes.

Mean while, some of their manœuvres transpired from time to time, and occasioned great fermentation amongst a people jealous to distraction of their newly-acquired liberty. The republican party became convinced, that even the half-victory which principle had gained over prejudice in the constitution of 1791 would be lost; and intelligent men became generally persuaded, that the preservation of a system of *real* freedom was incompatible with the existence of a king possessed of vast power, and a civil list of near a million and a half sterling a year. Three parties now agitated the state, that of the *Constitutionalists*, who still hoped that the system formed in 1791 would answer—they were the most numerous: that of the *Courtiers*, who wished to bring back the old system—they were the most opulent and artful: and that of the *Republicans*, who were neither powerful nor wealthy.

These parties kept up an incessant struggle; and it was still greater in reality than in appearance. It was a real civil war, without the name. The republicans exerted every nerve to diminish the power of the monarch, which experience indeed had proved to be dangerous and alarming. The
courtiers.

courtiers profited by this circumstance, to persuade a weak prince, that there was a settled design to destroy the monarchy. As I do not mean to enter into details, I forbear to mention a multitude of circumstances that might be alledged in proof of these assertions, and hasten on to my conclusion.

War was declared against Austria and Prussia; and the republican party, to protect the capital which was threatened, and partly to guard against the designs of the court, obtained a decree for establishing near Paris an army of 20,000 men. The king refused to sanction it; opposed his veto also to the decree against the priests, and finally dismissed the patriotic ministers, Roland, Claviere, and Servan. The war became now open and avowed: the people broke into the Tuilleries on the 20th of June. On the 28th La Fayette, who had quitted his army, came to Paris to declare against the Jacobins. Towards the end of July the Marseillois arrived.—They had been first invited to concur in the ceremony of the fœderation; but the principal object of their journey was doubtless to support the patriots against the court.—A report having been spread, that a plot was formed to attack the palace, the royalists collected; and the king, who but a little before had declared that he wanted no guard but his people, but who, nevertheless, had still kept the Swiss guards about him, in opposition both to the constitution and to an express decree of the Assembly, suffered himself now to be surrounded farther with troops of armed men.

The people viewed these proceedings with extreme discontent. A new report was spread, and gained credit, that an attack was meditated on the National Convention by the Court; that the principal

eipal patriots in Paris were to be sacrificed—lists of proscription were handed about: the combat became mortal, as Petion says, between the people and the court—"one or other of them must fall!"—The people rose in insurrection the 10th of August, and menaced the palace—the guards fired on them! a fierce battle ensued, which terminated in the ruin of the monarchy, the captivity of the king, and the establishment of the republic.

These events appeared so extraordinary to us in England, that at first we did not know what to think of them; and for a long time our opinion was unfavourable. But when circumstances were better known, when the treachery of the court was more fully developed, and when we found men of respectability and worth, such as Garat, Rabaud, &c. declaring their complete adherence to the new system, and their perfect conviction that the revolution of the 10th of August was as necessary as that of the 14th of July; we acquiesced in their opinion, and recognized a republic, to which, not republicans by their efforts, but courtiers by their insincerity, had given existence.

The second insurrection had, however, an effect which was not foreseen at the time, but which has been severely felt since. It set the minds of the people afloat, after they had been completely tranquillised; and augmented their natural suspicion of their governors, to a degree almost incompatible with the existence of government.

It is easy to see how this came about. When the people were called upon to deliver themselves from their tyrants, and establish in their place legal governors, their duty was clear: nothing was wanting but an adequate force—the object was simple.

ple and speedily accomplished. Here the *revolutionary power* of the people should have ceased, and here it would have ceased, but for the treachery of the court! The Bastille was destroyed—the old despotism overthrown—the rights of man declared, and a constitution formed. The people were satisfied, so satisfied that, as I have already mentioned, those who wished to carry improvements farther, instead of receiving the thanks of their fellow-citizens, were blamed and traduced*. Much has been said since the time of Rousseau, respecting “the *Social Contract*.” Here was a complete example of one: a fair bargain was entered into between the nation and the court, (I do not say the king, because his total want of character renders it impossible to know when he acted from himself and when from the impulse of others): the first was sincere, and would have kept its word; the last was deceitful, and by its deceit became the author of a SECOND REVOLUTION!

This second revolution cost much to bring it about: it was a severe effort.—The Jacobins, inflexible friends of the people, called loudly for it, long before it took place, and, as it often happens to popular assemblies, somewhat imprudently and rudely. Many of the constitutionalists, on the other hand, ill informed as to the designs of the court, alarmed at the violence of the Jacobins, and fearing that the portion of liberty which they had already attained might be lost in the dangerous effort to obtain more, abandoned the cause of the people, and became in a more or less degree royalists. Of this number was La Fayette, whom the exaggeration

* Brissot, speaking of 1791, says, that even then the Jacobins trembled at the name of republicanism—and Robespierre defended himself against the imputation. *Discours*, Oct. 24, 1792.

exaggeration of ideas here has converted into the blackest of traitors, but whose conduct I think may be perfectly well explained without the suspicion of ill intention; or who, at the utmost, I think, from the personal knowledge I have had of his integrity and love of liberty, could only have been the dupe of designing men around him, who induced him to co-operate with them on pretences totally different from their real views.

From these circumstances, you see, Madam, how it happened, that the people, who had originally only to decide between the supporters of the old system, their avowed enemies, and the promoters of the new, their avowed friends; were now called to the difficult task of deciding between different classes of men, who equally professed attachment to their interest, and only differed in the mode of promoting it. This was an affair infinitely complicated, and to which their intelligence was totally unequal. What was, in such a case, to be expected? exactly that which has happened. First, they began to attach themselves in preference to persons in the lowest classes of life. This was natural, for we are all inclined to place most confidence in those of our own station. Indeed, there are but few of the superior ranks, under the old governments of Europe, who feel sufficiently the dignity of MAN, and the comparative triviality of his artificial appendages, to pay that humane attention to inferiors, which alone can inspire esteem or conciliate affection! Nor was it merely the preference of persons in lower life, that was to be reckoned an evil; but unfortunately almost all in that rank of life in France were extremely ignorant, and consequently incapable of executing with wisdom or propriety the functions of legislators. Even

Even this was not all, the people became, in numerous instances, the dupes of impudence and false pretensions. Men who had the art of speaking plausibly imposed upon their imaginations; violence usurped the place of real courage; effrontery served instead of argument, and every one, in proportion to the extravagance and exaggeration of his ideas, was deemed more truly the **FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE**.

Such is the state of things at present in France; at least, whatever other ideas may be entertained of it by the French themselves, I am well persuaded, such is the judgment pronounced upon it by impartial Europe. We are of opinion, that owing to the operation of the causes formerly mentioned, every assembly has been worse composed than the one that preceded it, and of course the present Convention worst of all. The number of ignorant heads, and consequently the power of men of bad hearts, has been continually increasing. I am clear, however, that the great majority of the three assemblies have been well-meaning and worthy men. But good intention is not alone sufficient to constitute a legislator.

It is a singular and melancholy consideration, that at present the great characters who began the revolution, and to whose talents and exertions the chief merit of it is due, have either disappeared, or are reduced to silence and obscurity. I will not speak of Barnave or Montesquieu; let even La Fayette and Clermont Tonnere be reckoned of doubtful merit; but impartial Europe demands why La Rochefoucauld became the victim of popular fury? she demands where is honest Manuel, where is Bailly? why she hears little of ingenious Roederer; and who are the men to whom France
now

now gives that confidence in her senate which she would have conferred on Petion, Brissot, Condorcet, Sieyes, and Buzot? The fact is, that at a time when all arts are absorbed in the single one of SPEAKING, or rather of DECLAIMING; when noise drowns calm argument, and lungs supply the place of reason—when finally, the clamours of ignorant and unprincipled tribunes, are constantly raised against every measure that is not exaggerated or ferocious, the man of modest worth, the sage and the philosopher, will keep silence.

The ministry is better composed, if we except the Jacobin Pache*, to whose incapacity alone it was owing that Dumourier failed in the conquest of Holland. The machinations of a faction, acting on popular ignorance, chased away the virtuous Roland, whom all Europe revered; but Garat remains, and his other colleagues possess the reputation of talents and virtue. For this reason perhaps, at such a period as this, they are unable to do any thing. Such men are not fit instruments for the faction that reigns. The *municipality* of Paris, which is very differently composed, domineers over all, and is supported by the *sections*, now for the most part deserted by the intelligent part of the citizens, and by the *Jacobins*, who are as unlike to what that society originally was, as modern Italy is to ancient Rome.

If we should resume the whole of this narration, we should find that the progress of the French revolution, may be divided into the following stages.

I. That in which the people and the aristocracy united to limit the monarchy, July 14, 1789.

II. That

* Now Mayor of Paris.

II. That in which the people began to destroy the aristocracy, with the concurrence, in appearance at least, of the majority of the nobles. The real period of this was August 4, 1789, when privileges were given up, and feudal rights abolished. But, in compliance with popular ideas, we may fix it at June 20, 1790, when titles were abolished.

III. That in which the aristocracy, who had hitherto acted with the people, coalesced with the court against the people. This period commenced immediately after the return of the king, June 25, 1791, and was marked by the defection of Barnave, the Lameths, &c. &c.

IV. That in which the people destroyed at once both the monarchy and the aristocracy, and established the republic, August 10, 1792.

V. That in which the people divided among themselves, and became the prey of factious men; when a minority, both in the Convention and in the country at large, governed the majority, subdued by fear. This period of anarchy commenced soon after the 10th of August: its progress is marked by the massacre of the prisoners the second of September 1792, and the pillage of the grocers, the 23d and 26th of February, 1793.

Thus, in the course of four years, has France, partly from her own fault, but much more from the fault of unfortunate circumstances, passed from *despotism*, thro' the stages of *limited monarchy* and *republicanism*, to *anarchy*, which is certainly begun, but of which I hope the reign will not be long.

You will perhaps be disposed at present to put a question to me—why I have said nothing of the second of September? Truly I would have been glad to have blotted out for ever the remembrance of that horrid day—but impartial history, which in
a free

a free state refuses to screen any event from the scrutiny of truth, left me no hopes of throwing a veil over that dreadful transaction; and the sole reason why I have not already mentioned it was, because it did not at all necessarily enter into my narration. It was truly a *hors d'oeuvre*, an event isolated from the general course of events, an accident that attended on, but had no necessary connection with the revolution.

Over this shocking transaction there hangs a darkness which no investigation has yet been able to penetrate.—I shall give you candidly my opinion; but I wish you to receive it with caution. I would not impose on your conjecture for history.

Of one thing I am clear, which is, that the English idea of it is totally unfounded. In London it was represented as a mere wanton and unprovoked effusion of the cruelty and ferociousness of the French populace. It was said that, without any motive but the thirst of blood, the people of Paris rose in general insurrection, rushed into the prisons, and massacred many thousands of unhappy wretches who were confined there! But such a massacre, Madam, was never heard of not even in the darkest ages.—Exaggerated power, the greatest corrupter of our feeble virtue, has converted some individuals into monsters—as for instance, the late Emperor of Morocco, who found his highest amusement on his death-bed, in shooting at, cutting and wounding the unhappy prisoners whom the chance of war had put into his power! But never was it known, that a whole people were thus depraved. Read the narrations that history has preserved of those dreadful scenes which disgrace humanity, and you will uniformly find, that either some great political delusion,

lusion, religious superstition, or the fatal habit which despotism has introduced amongst men, of renouncing their own reason, and blindly obeying the wicked commands of a tyrant, were the real causes that occasioned them. You may be assured then, that the second of September was not an exception to all that was ever before experienced in the history of the world. Such strange views of it may be left to a certain parliamentary declaimer ! but men of sober sense will find it analogous to other events in history, and explain it on the known principles of human nature.

Two opinions of the origin of this event are generally entertained here, neither of which appear to me quite exact. It is supposed by some, that the second of September was the result of a deep and long-premeditated plan, formed by certain persons in high authority, with a view to place all the power of the state in the hands of their own party, and at the same time to revenge their private quarrels on those who had become obnoxious to them by opposing their ambitious views. But on this supposition, of a premeditated plan by a party, it appears to me very difficult to account for their beginning with so useless and odious a measure as the massacre of helpless prisoners. Such men were not even directly their enemies, and in their confinement could no longer do them harm : and after they were destroyed, the great work still remained to be accomplished, namely, the ruin of those able and active men in the Convention, who *directly* opposed their wishes. The massacre of the prisoners appears to me so strange, so dangerous, so round about and unlikely a mode of obtaining the chief power, that I cannot imagine any party at once so weak and wicked as to have projected it

for this end ; unless we could attribute to them the horrid atrocity of intending to begin with the prisoners, and afterwards to excite the people to murder the ministers, the principal members of the National Assembly, and all those citizens of Paris who had distinguished themselves by a love of order and respect to the laws. There is indeed one monster in France, to whom nature, by some strange deviation, has given a human form, who is capable of having conceived such a plan, or any other, however execrable : but this wretch stands separated, by his ferocious folly, from even the worst men in France, and if he had formed such a plan, it must have been perfectly certain to those with whom he then acted, that all the influence he had attained by deluding the people, would have been unable to have induced them to proceed to such horrors. With respect to avenging private quarrels, there has hardly been alleged any instances of persons being imprisoned, where there was not ground for suspecting them of aristocracy. Petion, who admits that several of the arrests were too hasty and on too slight grounds, does not however insinuate, that they originated from private enmity. And it seems evident, that if this motive had operated in any considerable degree in the affair, the instances would have been numerous, and the connection between the cause and effect easy to be traced, from that which existed between the victims and the perpetrators of the crime.

Another opinion is, that the massacre of the prisoners was solely the act of thirty or forty assassins, while all Paris, intimidated or ignorant of the smallness of their force, remained motionless, suffered the horrid deed to be executed, and the perpetrators to escape.

That

That the immediate *executors* of this crime were generally a set of ignorant, brutal, and ferocious wretches, such as are always to be found in great towns, I readily admit. But that a handful of such banditti formed the original plan of destroying about 1500 persons, from whom they could have no hope of plunder; and continued the execution of it for several days, while the municipality, the department, the Convention, and the national guard were all in existence, is to me utterly incredible; nor can I possibly free my mind from the belief, that the assassins who committed this crime acted under an impulse very general amongst the people, and were connived at, if not originally employed, by some great invisible power.

If it were allowable to name any one without proofs, suspicion would fall on the municipality of Paris, leaving out the Mayor, M. Petion, who most evidently was judged unworthy to be entrusted with this infernal secret; and of the municipal body that part who then formed the committee of Surveillance is more particularly to be suspected:—"That committee," says Petion, "filled all the prisons. It is not to be dissembled, that, if many of these arrests were just and necessary, others were too slightly ventured on. The blame of this is rather to be thrown on their agents than on the chiefs. The officers of police were ill advised; and amongst others, one man, whose very name is become shocking—whose very name throws terror into the minds of all peaceable citizens, seemed to have seized on the direction of all their motions. Assiduously present at all their conferences, he meddled in every affair; he spoke and commanded as a master. I complained of it loudly to the commune, and I terminated my opinion with these words—

Marat is either the most foolish, or the most wicked of men!"

But even Marat, who certainly is not deficient in acuteness, must have known that he could not produce any effect, unless there existed a *predispotion* in the people to some act of the kind. It must have been on the ground of this that he made his preparations for an event which he foresaw would happen; and the assassins who committed it must also have had good reason to believe that they would act with impunity under the protection of Marat and the connivance of the committee of Surveillance.

Had the crimes of the second of September been solely the act of a few low villains, it would have been easy to have detected and punished them. But, in spite of the repeated calls of private members, and the decrees of the Assembly for investigating this dark business and executing vengeance on its authors, no light has yet been thrown on it, nor any one punished on account of it. The names of the judges who passed sentence on the prisoners are unknown; and, though thousands must have seen them at the time, no one pretends to know them, or to have seen them since. The same invisible power that produced this event has continued to paralyze every effort to discover the executors of it, and will very probably baffle ultimately every attempt to bring them to justice.

If we cannot trace the origin of the second of September to any one cause; if it be true that even the influence and the wickedness of Marat could not alone have produced it, there will arise a probability, that it originated from a combination of causes, and these such as we have scarcely ever known to have occurred at the same time. We
may

may trace these by reflecting on the circumstances previous to, or existing at that time. If in these we should find some which rendered the prisoners the objects of *detestation* to the people, and others suddenly superadded, which rendered them not less the objects of their *dread*, in all probability we shall have discovered the primary cause of their destruction.

Let me recal to your thoughts the tenth of August.—It is the true key to the second of September. On that day some thousand persons are said to have fallen, in a conflict which the people considered as solely occasioned by the treachery of the court and the aristocracy. The death of these persons filled Paris with widows and orphans—with parents distracted at the loss of their children—sisters bereft of their brothers—and relations mourning for their friends. What in foreign war produces only sorrow and tears, in civil contests begets wrath and fury. Such was the case on this occasion. Indignation soon succeeded to grief; and dreadful vengeance was determined on, as soon as an opportunity should offer to put it in execution.

The persons then in power, and especially the committee of Surveillance, made strict search after the authors and abettors of this affair. A vast number of persons previously suspected of aristocracy, or accused of being concerned in promoting the views of the court, at that period were arrested. The gaols were soon gorged with prisoners, and the tribunals overloaded with business, and, hampered by the common forms of justice, too slow for a period of revolution, made almost no perceptible progress in bringing the guilty to

condemnation*. The people rendered jealous by perpetual deception, began to believe that the criminals were secretly favoured by the judges. It was said, that "crimes had wings, and the law limped after them;" and a general murmur and dissatisfaction took place.

"Justice," says Petion, "was slow to pronounce on the fate of the prisoners, and their numbers increased every day. On the twenty-third of August one of the sections came to the council of the municipality, and declared expressly, that the citizens, weary of the delays which took place in the decisions, would force the gates of these asylums, and sacrifice to their vengeance the criminals detained there. This petition, conceived in the most frantic terms, remained without censure—*It was even received with applauses!*"

There was still, however, something farther wanting to produce a movement so irregular and horrid as the massacre of the second of September. Unhappily the circumstances supplied this: for at this critical moment arrived the news, that the Austrian and Prussian armies had repulsed the French troops—that Longwy and Verdun were surrendered by treachery—and that the Duke of Brunswick was in full march to Paris. On the twenty-seventh the Assembly ordered 30,000 men
to

* It is certain that the new system of jurisprudence rendered the conviction of criminals tedious. An acute writer observes, that the best informed lawyers had said to him, that they would never have been able to convict a criminal, if they had followed exactly the new forms. See a pamphlet, entitled, "*Lettre d'un Négociant Anglois à un Négociant François, &c.*" As it is the genius of free governments, however, to set a *high value on human life*, it is right that it should be rendered difficult to convict the accused. Only rules generally good will not apply to the moment of a revolution.

to march instantly to the frontiers, to make a last effort against the enemy. On the thirty-first, the acquittal of the minister Montmorin exasperated the people; and at the same time a person condemned revealed a plot, said to be formed to release all the prisoners, who, after committing every excess in the city, were to go out to meet the Duke of Brunswick and his army.

Consternation seized all mens minds; and, while thousands were preparing to quit Paris, to march against the combined armies, the fatal ideas that produced the second of September were either suggested by certain wretches who wished for such an event, or rather spontaneously arose in mens minds from the circumstances. "How can we," it was said, "leave Paris when the prisons are filled with traitors who ought long since by their death to have atoned for their crimes against their country? What if this murderous Quixotte, this Brunswick, should arrive at Paris, to make it an example and a terror to the world, as he has threatened in his horrid manifesto? What then would become of our wives and children, when he opened the gates of the prisons, and let loose on them these wretches whom he regards as his best friends? Let us go, before we quit our homes, and execute deserved punishment on these traitors. Now is the time to revenge our brethren murdered on the tenth of August!"

Whether just or erroneous, these arguments produced conviction. The horrid deed was determined on; the banditti were not wanting to execute it. The inhabitants of Paris, pusillanimous, or ignorant of the extent of the danger, dared not to stir out of their houses during the confusion. The constituted authorities, believing that the people

ple were either concerned in it, or at least approved of it, and that the frenzy was irresistible, either did not interfere at all, or at least not with that energy which was requisite to check the evil. Some deputies of the Convention went to the spot; and amongst them the courageous efforts of Manuel merit to be recorded. But he was not supported. Petion ordered the judges, who called themselves the *executive power* of the people, to quit their savage office. They obeyed; but almost immediately returned to their post. Of all men it seems most likely that Santerre, the commandant general, might have stopt this lawless and cruel affair; and it is to him, perhaps chiefly, that Petion alludes, when he says, that these crimes might have been prevented, "if all those who had power and force in their hands had viewed them with horror; but I must say it, because it is true, several of these public men, of these defenders of the country, believed that these disastrous and dishonourable days were necessary; that they purged the state from dangerous men; that they carried terror into the minds of conspirators; and that crimes odious in morality were useful in politics*."

Such, if I am not misinformed, was the second of September. And, if this account be just, we shall not be at a loss to see why it has hitherto been impracticable to punish the authors of it. One set of men seem to have contrived—another to have executed—a third connived at it—and the rest might, but did not, hinder it. Who is to be punished

* The history of the second of September is a proper example of the consequences of their doctrine, who maintain two kinds of morality, and assert that the morals of a statesman are different from that of an individual.—To such horrors as we have just mentioned does this system inevitably lead.

nished where all is to blame? What satisfaction would there be in bringing to punishment a few ignorant wretches, the mere instruments of the crime, while the authors of it are either unknown, or too numerous, or too powerful, to be punished? Finally, what punishment was to be inflicted on a crime, though it must for ever be deplored by humanity, and condemned by religion, yet must be acknowledged by impartial reason to have been committed under such peculiar circumstances, as served to conceal its horror under a veil of supposed necessity?

Even this wretched apology does not extend to every person concerned in the affair of the second of September. There may have been, there probably were, some who concurred in it from the basest motives. I only speak of the conduct and views of the majority. And I am very far from thinking, even with them, that the measure was either necessary or justifiable. I regard it in no other light than as a horrid crime. It filled Paris with horror, distrust, and dismay; it shocked all the people of Europe, and rendered liberty, as Roderer well expressed it, "*épouvantable aux nations* *."

The illustrious Klopstock, author of the *Messiah*, who had accepted the title of *French citizen*, sent it back as ashamed to bear it after this event. Had it been useful to the revolution, I would not have vindicated it; for I do not think that there are two kinds of morality any more than two kinds of truth. I am not of Mr. Burke's opinion that vice by losing its grossness loses half its evil. Such doctrines are most pernicious in practice. Gross
vice

* Frightful to the nations.

vice is less dangerous than that which is refined; as a man is more in danger of suffocation from the vapour of charcoal, which secretly and imperceptibly pollutes the air, than from the smoke of common fuel, which announces the danger by offending the senses by its disagreeable odour.

I believe nobody has as yet attempted a regular account of the affair of the second of September. I may therefore claim indulgence if I have mistaken some points. I am inclined, however, to think that Petion's opinion is nearly the same with mine:—"Were these assassinations," says he, "commanded, or were they directed by certain men? I have had lists given me; I have received reports; I have collected some facts: but, if I had to pronounce as a judge, I could not say—There is the criminal!" M. de St. Meard, who was confined in the Abbaye St. Germain, and tried with others before this dreadful tribunal, has written an account of what he saw and heard, in a very interesting pamphlet, entitled, "*Mon agonie de trente-huit heures**;" and even from his relation, horrible as it is, it is easy to see that the affair of the second of September was not a mere indiscriminate massacre, but a kind of *savage justice*, executed by a people frantic at the moment with fear, jealousy, and a thirst of vengeance. A soldier, whom M. de St. Meard was fortunate enough to interest in his favour by speaking to him in the dialect of his country, said, "If thou art a priest, or a conspirator of the palace of M. Veto, thou art ruined; but, if thou art no traitor, don't fear—I will answer for thy life." "I am very sure," replied St. Meard, "not to be accused of these

* My agony of thirty-eight hours.

things;

things ; but I pass for somewhat of an aristocrat." " Oh, that is nothing," returned he : " the judges know that there are honest men of all classes. The president is an honest man, and no fool." M. de St. Meard was acquitted, although he had the extreme imprudence to avow before the judges, that he was a *royalist*. A murmur which his words occasioned was checked by one of them, who said, " We are not here to judge opinions, but the consequences of them." On his acquittal the president ordered three men to conduct him to his own house, who faithfully performed their mission, and refused a purse, which his friend who lived there, in the ecstasy of his joy, offered them : " We do not execute this profession for money," said they. — " Behold your friend !—He promised us a glass of brandy. We will take that, and return to our post*."

From the same publication it appears that there were attendant on these executions a great number of people, who took no part in them but as spectators ; and of whom Petion says, that " they observed a mournful silence at the sentences of death, and uttered cries of joy when they heard pronounced an acquittal." It appears that they even interposed sometimes to save a prisoner : for old M. Cazotte

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being

* The form of the acquittal was as follows : " We, the commissaries named by the people to execute justice on the traitors detained in the prison of the Abbaye, having made the citizen J. St. Meard appear before us the fourth of September, who has proved that the accusations brought against him were false ; and that he never entered into any plot against the patriots : we have made him be proclaimed innocent, in presence of the people, who applauded the liberty we granted to him. In faith of which we have delivered him the present certificate at his demand. We invite all the citizens to grant him aid and assistance. At the Abbaye, the 4th year of Liberty, and the first of Equality.

POIR . . . BER . . . ?

being condemned and brought out to be executed, his daughter followed him, and, courageously grasping him around the neck, to save him from the sabres lifted up to destroy him, the people, moved with the spectacle, demanded his pardon, and obtained it.

In an aristocratic publication*, where various enormities of the massacre are carefully detailed, I remember to have read, that, amongst those who were employed in the savage task of destroying the prisoners, one young man of eighteen years of age was observed to be peculiarly active. Being asked the reason, he said, he had lost his two brothers the tenth of August, and was resolved to revenge their death. He boasted that he had put to death 50 prisoners with his own hand. This strongly confirms my idea, that the second of September drew its origin from the tenth of August.

The same author gives a list of the persons put to death, extracted from the registers of the prisons, by which and other lists it does not appear that their number could exceed 1500, though some one in London published a pamphlet, with the prefix of "SIX THOUSAND PERSONS MURDERED IN PARIS." Of these 1500, too, it must be noted, that a great number were imprisoned for other crimes—for murder, robbery, forgery, &c. Mr. Perilhe, the ingenious author of the History of Surgery, a man of probity and judgment, whom I have long known here, and who had much opportunity to be acquainted with this melancholy scene, assured me, that very few indeed suffered whom the law would not have condemned. It is certain also, that some were suffered to escape whom the law afterwards seized on, and

* *Almanac des honnêtes gens.*

and condemned to death. There was one such instance in the section des Cordeliers, where M. Pettit lives.

This is the best account I can give you of this strange affair. Those who conceive it originally the work of some particular men, have named Marat, Robespierre, Sergent, Panis, Santerre, and Danton. But proofs have not been brought forward; and, till I am otherwise informed, I must believe that the treachery of the court made the tenth of August—the tenth of August laid the foundation of the second of September—and the Duke of Brunswick provoked the execution of it.

Let us now endeavour to trace the origin of the erroneous opinions entertained in England respecting the French revolution. I said, that we at first regarded it in a doubtful point of view, because we thought it would not succeed; for we did not know how strong and universal a spirit of liberty had arisen in the nation. As it advanced, it gained more of our confidence; but it proceeded so violently, and so soon outran the limits of our ideas of liberty, that it awakened a jealousy and dislike in many minds; and these prejudices were unfortunately confirmed by various other causes. One of the first and capital of these was the *misrepresentation of the newspapers*.—The editors of these journals were often misinformed as to the facts: yet, had they confined themselves to fact, their errors would have been comparatively few. But they indulged largely in criticisms and speculations on these facts; and for this they had neither adequate sources of information, nor sufficient knowledge of the genius and manner of the country. It is easy to obtain a superficial knowledge of a foreign nation: but to delineate justly its history; to trace events to their sources

sources in its character and habits, so as to appreciate their real nature; and fix the degree of approbation or censure which belong to them, requires such an intimate acquaintance with a people as cannot be obtained without living amongst them, and possessing opportunities of information and a capacity of profiting from them that does not fall to the share of many of the class of writers now alluded to. Every man of observation, who has visited foreign countries, must have experienced the erroneousness of the first judgment he pronounced on practices different from those of his own country; and will certainly own, that, when he knew the whole, he found many things to be proper, and even necessary, that appeared to him at first useless or wrong. It is for this reason that the books of travellers, even of such as do not intend to deceive, are filled with absurd wonders, with applause and censure equally misplaced. A mind full of English ideas is incapable of justly appreciating single parts of French manners; as a mind filled with French ideas is incapable of forming a just judgment on single parts of English manners. For this reason the ideas and conduct of the French are almost constantly misrepresented in our newspapers; and the same happens to us in theirs. As they know still less of us than we do of them, from their almost universal ignorance of our language, it is incredible what absurdities one meets with in their journals relative to the affairs of England.

But misrepresentation from ignorance, though a copious enough source, was not the only one of the errors of our newspapers. The majority of them must be attributed to misrepresentation from *design*. It was supposed from the beginning of the French revolution that our court viewed it in an unfa-

unfavourable light; and therefore all those called ministerial papers united in decrying it. Add to this, that the opulent emigrants, and especially M. de Calonne, spared neither pains nor expence to influence them. It is, I believe, a notorious fact, that the latter expended considerable sums in this way.—The motives are obvious.

For these reasons I have maintained, ever since the beginning of the revolution, that no man could form any adequate idea of that great event from English newspapers. The Morning Chronicle comes near to form an exception; and owes its superiority to the impartiality and talents of its editors—to their great exertions to procure information—and to their stricter adherence to the authority of the French journals.

But I must observe farther, that even the French journals do not convey to an English reader a perfect idea of the French revolution, as it affected the whole of the country. For they are all printed in Paris, represent its state, and imbibe its character. Now Paris has been the centre of all the agitations, and the theatre of crimes unknown in the country. It presents, therefore, a picture of the revolution so much more unfavourable than the other parts of the kingdom, that I will venture to affirm, had one Englishman known the French revolution only from a journal published at Paris, and another only from a journal published at Bourdeaux, where peace and tranquillity have almost uninterruptedly reigned, their general idea of the event would have been widely different. I could wish, therefore, our countrymen, if they mean to do justice to the French revolution, not to mistake Paris for France, nor reason from the troubles of that corrupt metropolis to the state of the provinces, which
until

until a late period have been generally much more tranquil.

It was not the newspapers only that calumniated the French revolution. At a very early period, it was attacked with all the powers of eloquence by Mr. Burke, a writer who had long enjoyed an extensive reputation, and whose opinion, on any subject relative to politics, could not fail to excite curiosity, and to be read with attention. Introduced into life under aristocratical patronage, he was led to espouse the party of opposition in parliament, and in consequence lost the favour of the court. While his party had a prospect of succeeding, and by their numbers and talents formed a formidable phalanx against the minister, Mr. Burke adhered faithfully to their cause, and during the illness of the king, no man laboured more diligently to establish the regency. But when under the administration of Mr. Pitt, the abilities and prudence of the minister, joined to a singular concurrence of fortunate circumstances, had gained him the general confidence of the nation, and rendered the hopes of opposition almost desperate, our author appeared desirous of looking out for an opportunity to make his peace with the court, and found it in the French revolution.

I am ready to own, that there were in that revolution several circumstances calculated to shock Mr. Burke's early prejudices; and I am far from accusing him of having no motive to write against it, but that of reconciling himself to the court: for he had always seen government through the spectacles of old establishments, and not as it is in itself, or as it ought to be founded in the nature of man, and in the principles of eternal reason. But while I make this concession, which candour obliges me to do, I must

must at the same time declare, that I cannot give him all the credit that some do for his predictions respecting the French revolution; for many of them have not been verified, and he that makes a number of bold guesses, will always succeed in some of them. Those that have taken place, have generally arisen from other causes than those supposed by Mr. Burke; and I may add, as to the rest, that the judicious friends of the French revolution foresaw, as well as he did, and feared the evils he predicted; but as they believed there was a possibility that they might not happen, they were glad to see a trial made for the instruction of the human race. For instance, in treating of military juries, and other novelties, proposed in France, Mr. Christie declined vindicating them, and represented them only as bold experiments, worthy of being made, to ascertain how far we could go in extending liberty and equal laws to all the classes of society. It is taking a safe side, in all cases, to prophesy the failure of great undertakings, for few of them succeed, compared to those that fail. There were, I dare say, many narrow-minded, splenetic, or selfish men, who predicted the ruin of those heroic spirits, who first projected a voyage round the world, and perhaps reproached their undertaking as a mad attempt, which would end in their own destruction and that of the seamen they carried with them. It is easy to argue in this way; but generous minds hope the best, and see with pleasure the commencement of enterprizes, that promise to improve the condition of humanity; rejoice in their progress, and mourn at their fall.

But there is another reproach of more importance to be made to Mr. Burke: it is, that, in all probability, his predictions, and those of the writers who followed him on the same side in France,
were

were in a great measure the causes of the evils they foretold. Mr. Burke predicted the death of Louis the sixteenth, at a time when not a human being in France had such an idea in his mind; and the eloquent and specious description he gave of the imaginary disgrace and distress of royalty, most certainly had a considerable effect on the mind of that unfortunate prince, and still more on that of the queen, and the persons of her court. We all know that the king had no reason to be discontented with his situation as it was determined by the Constituent Assembly: but we also know, that nothing is so easy for an able man, as to render a weak man discontented with his condition, by persuading him that he is ill-treated, and painting to him delusive pictures of advantages that he ought to enjoy, or of inconveniences that he ought not to suffer. But for Mr. Burke, and his associates in France, it is highly probable Louis the sixteenth might now have been reigning peaceably on his throne. I do not mean to accuse their intentions; but I am warranted to say, that their writings contributed at once to render the court discontented with the revolution; and the nation suspicious of the court. Of consequence, they had a great share in producing the calamities of the monarch and his unfortunate family.

A multitude of writers replied to Mr. Burke. Mr. Christie produced *facts* that have never been disproved. Mr. Mackintosh vied with him in his own manner, and exhibited his eloquence without his disorder; while Paine, by profound reflections on the origin of government, and the rights of man, opened a new field of speculation, and made a deep and extraordinary impression on the public mind.

I know :

I know not whether you ever chanced to meet with the opinion of Mr. Garat, at present minister of the interior department, on the works of Mr. Burke and Mr. Mackintosh; but if you have not, I am convinced you will thank me for communicating it. When one peruses, says he, the work of Mr. Burke, so full of fire, disorder, and opinions taken for granted—so bold in style, and so feeble in reasoning—one would suppose that one read the work of a *young man*; while, on the other hand, that of Mr. Mackintosh, so well arranged, so firm in principles, and exact in reasoning, gives one the idea of a mind matured by age and experience: yet Mr. Burke has seen sixty years, and Mr. Mackintosh not thirty. But Burke is an old orator, and Mackintosh a young philosopher. Originally their powers may not have been very different; but the one has nourished his faculties by the study of ancient rhetoricians and parliamentary orators, while the latter has formed his mind by the study of Locke, and Tacitus, and Collins.

A variety of other answers to Mr. Burke appeared, and the public read with satisfaction the performances of Mr. Rous, Mrs. Macaulay Graham, Miss Wollstoncraft, Sir Brooke Boothby, and others. These writers made a powerful impression on the thinking part of the English nation. The momentary effect of Mr. Burke's eloquence was effaced, the contest on his side became doubtful, and at length disadvantageous. The war with Austria and Prussia, as it gave the idea that the French would certainly be crushed, gave a turn to this disposition of things; but when the victories of Dumourier extricated them triumphantly from this danger, the public approbation of their cause became stronger than ever. All the timid men, who
were

were afraid to declare their sentiments, and all those who have no principle but to be with the uppermost, began openly to espouse the French side; and this disposition was signally displayed at the anniversary of the English revolution, at the London tavern, Nov. 4, 1792, where France occupied the whole attention of a most numerous, respectable, and harmonious company.

A series of events were however approaching, which were calculated to produce a very different effect. The constitution of 1791, formed by the first Assembly, being destroyed, and with it those principles of moderation and that limited monarchy which the English are generally attached to, and which Mr. Christie had defended, the effect of his reasoning was in consequence invalidated; and Mr. Paine, having intermixed several personal sarcasms against the king and government of England, which irritated a number of persons, and carried his principles far beyond the system established in our country, gave rise to a republican spirit, which alarmed the court, the nobles, the clergy, and finally, all the great proprietors. A spirit of general terror was produced, and by certain persons, for certain ends, zealously propagated.

The destruction of the monarchy in France on the 10th of August—the horrors of the massacre of the 2d of September, and then the death of the king, finally alienated the minds of Englishmen from the French revolution; rendered popular a war, which otherwise no minister would have dared to undertake; disgusted all wise, and shocked all humane men; and left to us, and all who had espoused the cause, no hope but that Heaven, which knows how to bring good out of evil, would watch
over

over an event so interesting to the welfare of mankind as the French revolution; nor suffer the folly and vice of the agents concerned in it, to spoil the greatest and noblest enterprize ever undertaken by a nation.

A variety of secondary causes operated, in conjunction with these primary ones, to alienate the minds of our countrymen from the French revolution. It is curious, and may be useful to trace a few of them.

Those who have long held the first rank in any society are always reluctant to yield up their place, or suffer others, who were below, to be raised above them. Accustomed to regard their own constitution as the perfection of civil polity, the English found a new source of disapprobation of the French institution: they forgot that their dearest privileges, trial by jury, the liberty of the press, and other advantages, had once been regarded by foreign nations as audacious novelties; and had scandalized the despots of Europe and their degraded subjects, as much as the new experiments of the French did at present. It was a common saying in France, under the old system, that

“ Le roi d’Angleterre

“ Regne dans l’enfer* ;

and the freedom of speech, and of writing on public affairs, the dearest rights of Englishmen, were constantly represented as absurd and noxious privileges, that occasioned eternal commotion in the state, and *disturbed the peace of government*. In spite of these facts, when circumstances arose that hurt their national vanity, by exalting a rival people,

* The king of England reigns in hell.

people, many of our countrymen appeared to have forgotten the ancient history of England—the nations seemed to have changed sides, and Englishmen talked of France as Frenchmen were wont to talk of England. But truth changes not with the fashions of the times. It was not to be forgotten, that the English had been the first *bold experimenters*, in the science of government in modern Europe—the first who carried into practical execution the calumniated principle of *EQUALITY*—the first people who formally brought a monarch to the scaffold—the first asserters of the neglected *rights of man*. In the common law of England, and in the commentaries of the older lawyers on it*; I have found all the fundamental principles of the French declaration des droits de l'homme.

But, said some, we made our revolution without bloodshed, and theirs has been a continued scene of confusion and murder. It is true, the revolution of 1688 was accomplished with little trouble; but it produced the wars of 1715 and 1745, in the last of which the metropolis very nearly fell into the hands of the enemy; a circumstance that would have placed a popish despot on the throne, and annihilated the liberties of England. And it is to be observed, that the revolution of 1688 was but one of many events that formed the English constitution. That system was the fruit of the labours of ages of struggle and confusion. The establishment of our liberties cost us many wars—and amidst the civil dissensions caused by the contest of principles against ancient error, our history records a sad catalogue of crimes and cruelties committed

* See the book entitled "*Doctor and Student*," Fortescue de laud. leg. Angl. &c.

committed on all sides. Whoever, Madam, will examine these annals, will soon be convinced, that we have not much ground to reproach our neighbours. In France, indeed, a greater number of events have been crowded into a shorter space of time; and the enormities in France have been committed at a period, when, by means of the facility of communication, all public events are more widely and rapidly circulated than in former ages; circumstances that alter the appearance, but not the reality of the case. We now enjoy the blessings of freedom, and have forgotten the price it cost our ancestors to obtain it. But no people ever travelled to the temple of Liberty by a path strewed with roses; nor has established tyranny ever yielded to reason and justice, till after a severe struggle. I do not pretend to justify the French, but I do not see much right that we at least have to condemn them. We cannot even reproach them with the fate of Louis the sixteenth, without calling up to remembrance that of Charles the first.

I will very readily grant, that the French have been guilty of many *imprudences* in the course of their revolution; and I think I can prove, that the antipathy conceived against them by other nations, owes its origin in a great measure to this circumstance. I shall previously observe, that they were under a necessity of making several important changes, all of which had a tendency to alienate the minds of numerous bodies of men, and to induce them, both at home and abroad, to censure the system of the revolution.

The

The diminution of the royal influence and authority, must have disgusted the courtiers and people of fashion.

The abolition of the feudal right, some with an inadequate, and others with no indemnity, must have disaffected a great number of seigneurs and country gentlemen, as well as their dependents.

The same thing must have happened to the nobles, and those dependent on them, from the humiliation first, and then the abolition of hereditary nobility.

The destruction of the parliaments disgusted a numerous and opulent body; and the changes in the military constitution, with the want of discipline that was the immediate consequence of it, amongst the soldiers, alienated the minds of all the superior officers.

The reforms in ecclesiastical affairs made a multitude of foes, and these of the most terrible kind. The abolition of tythes, the changes in the dioceses, and the abolition of monks, enraged the clergy, and terrified all the weak and superstitious of the nation.

Should we admit all these changes to have been necessary, we cannot however deny, that several of them were made too hastily, and with too little tenderness for the ancient prejudices and habits of life of those who were affected by them.

The alienation of the ecclesiastical lands has been so well defended by Mr. Mackintosh and other able writers, that I cannot, for my part, entertain a doubt on the subject. But it appeared hard in the eyes of strangers, that those who had been accustomed to live in splendour and affluence should on a sudden be so much reduced; and it was contended, that the diminution should not have
taken

taken place before the death of the actual incumbents. To this the French replied, that the reduction of the enormous salaries of the higher clergy was necessary to enable them to augment those of the lower orders, the only persons almost who were really useful to the state. The reduced salaries were declared to be amply sufficient, if the clergy would live as became their office, with temperance and simplicity, instead of scandalizing their profession, and injuring religion, by an example of riot and luxury. As the nation had taken upon itself the care of the poor, with which the clergy were formerly charged, it was contended, that on this account a considerable reduction of their revenues was a justifiable measure. Finally, it was said, that had they been burdened with the cares, expences, and duties of social life, had they been obliged to provide for a family, greater sympathy would have been shewn them; but that, being solitary and often useless individuals, the diminution of a revenue, which few of them applied to any good purpose, was to be regarded as a measure of public utility: not to mention, that as most of them were suspected of being secretly enemies to the revolution, it would have been very dangerous, at so critical a moment, to have left such large revenues in their power, as they possessed under their ancient system.

If these various considerations do not justify the *immediate* reduction of the salaries of the clergy, they at least palliate it in a great degree. The misfortune is, that they were more adapted to strike people on the spot, than strangers, who either could not know, or not so well see the force of them.

With

With respect to hereditary nobility, it merits your particular attention, that it was really abolished at that moment when the nobles renounced all their peculiar privileges, and submitted to be in every respect as the rest of their fellow-citizens. After this, nothing remained but an empty *name*, which consistency should have perhaps induced the nobles to have given up also; but which the people should not have quarrelled with, as they had obtained the *thing*. It is remarkable, however, that it was the abolition of the *name*, that made all the noise and clamour both in France and in Europe, insomuch that although the measure was supported by Montmorency and La Rochefoucauld, two of the most ancient families of noblesse in France, it occasioned a general murmur in that country, and a general disapprobation throughout Europe. The reasons alleged to vindicate it by the French legislators were, that after the renunciation of all privileges, the titles connected with them became useless, and served only as odious marks of distinction amongst the citizens. It was added, that the *name* might, at some future period, be the means of bringing back the *thing*; an apprehension that could not fail to suggest itself to the suspicious temper of the French people, and which the prodigious clamour occasioned by the abolition unfortunately appeared too well to justify.

Besides these there were a variety of other measures adopted by the French, which were either palpably unnecessary and impolitic, or of which the necessity and policy were at least in a very great degree questionable; and an impartial spectator cannot excuse them, for raising up needless hostility by wanton imprudences, at a period when they were

were constrained to make so many enemies, by the changes which their situation unavoidably required.

If the destruction of the monarchy was absolutely necessary, certainly the death of the king was not; and France might have struck surrounding nations with reverence at her sublime clemency, in place of shocking all Europe by a condemnation, the justice of which was at best doubtful, and which the generality of them at present consider as an atrocious crime. This sanguinary step excited horror in all the princes of Europe, from the legal sovereign of our favoured island, to the despot of Constantinople; for Selim the third, as soon as he received the news that the French had put to death their grand sultan, gave way to emotions of rage, and changed the lenient measures he had adopted towards the French, into violence and persecution. It had a much worse effect still than this—By violating royalty in so unnecessary, and, as it was thought, in so unjustifiable a manner, the French legislators offended the prejudices of the *people* in Europe, and in consequence, rendered national and unanimous those wars commenced against them by various princes, which, but for that, would have been languidly and ineffectually carried on.

However much indisposed our countrymen were to the French from preceding reasons, it is certain that the death of the king alone prepared their minds for war, and completed the triumph of the enemies of France in England. Various circumstances too attending the trial of Louis the sixteenth, which gave it an appearance of injustice and cruelty, contributed to strengthen the fatal impression it had made on the minds of men there; and the barbarous malignity with which certain persons

persecuted the memory of the fallen monarch, the absurd phrase of *tyrant*, which they constantly reiterated of a poor weak prince, who was neither naturally vicious, nor had half talents to be a tyrant, disgusted, as it could not fail to do in the highest degree, our reflecting countrymen.

It is natural to ask, what could have induced the French to adopt so unnecessary and so impolitic a measure? The answer is, the violence of the people, hurried on by the manœuvres of a set of sanguinary and unprincipled men, who at this period had obtained the chief power in the state. You will recollect, that, as I formerly stated, we had passed the GOLDEN, and indeed were now arrived at the IRON AGE of the French revolution. The people had some shadow of reason too; for in all the progress of the revolution they have never committed any violence without a motive that appeared to them sufficient to justify it. They said, "if the smaller traitors have been sacrificed, why should the greatest of all be suffered to escape?" They recollected with bitterness the massacre of the tenth of August, which they always regarded as occasioned by the court. During the trial I have frequently found difficulty to get into the Convention from the number of wounded and dying men who were assembled there to solicit vengeance: and it is certain that the severest menaces were offered to these deputies who appeared disposed to adopt lenient measures towards the king. How often they have been denounced since, and what risks of being murdered they have more than once incurred, are known to all the world.

It has been objected to the French, that they belied their own declaration of renouncing all conquests, and seemed, under the specious veil of promoting

moting the liberties of mankind, to be carrying on the same ambitious projects that were so justly censured in the old government. This objection, so far as it applied to their conquests, was exceedingly ill-founded; and could not have been made but by those who had been inattentive to the circumstances in which they were placed, and which rendered it impossible for them to have acted otherwise than they did. But the case is different with respect to their re-unions of other countries to their own, which were distinguished by the name of fraternizing. These re-unions were at first made with great caution, and not until the voice of the great majority of the inhabitants was freely and unequivocally pronounced in favour of the measure. —Such was the case at Avignon. Afterwards fewer precautions were observed; and finally, an opinion having been circulated, that the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Ocean were the natural and proper boundaries of France, it did not seem necessary to be very scrupulous in extending them to these limits, when the sacrifices were to be at the expence of powers hostile to the republic. These proceedings, however, alarmed foreign princes, and afforded them a pretence for alleging, that, if this system of fraternizing was not checked, the French would over-run all Europe. Most assuredly the National Convention had no such idea —most assuredly their object was infinitely different from that of ambitious conquerors; but it must at the same time be allowed, that very unguarded expressions were used by some members of the Convention, who have more patriotism than good sense; and, upon the whole, it seems evident that a friendly alliance between them and the vanquished nations would have answered every end of the re-union,

without exposing them to the imputation of ambitious projects and lust of domination.

I cannot quit this subject without remarking, that, from all I can judge, the true origin of this system of fraternizing is to be found in the *concert of princes* against the revolution. The French unquestionably had no intention, at the beginning of their revolution, nor for a long time after, of enlarging their territory; nor would they ever have thought of such a project, if the combination of kings to crush them had not suggested to them the necessity of opposing to this a combination of the people, and of surrounding their own country with a barrier of emancipated provinces, united to them by the strictest ties, and equally interested as themselves, to maintain the system of liberty and equality against the attempts of crowned despots. Wherever, therefore, the plan of *fraternizing nations* is mentioned, I would have it recalled to remembrance, that there existed, previous to it, a most formidable *fraternity of kings*.

The conduct of the French to the emigrants of their own nation, has been much censured; and unquestionably, whatever may be said of the general principle, it is impossible to conceive any thing more cruel or unjust than the operation of these laws on certain individuals. The difficulty is in such cases to separate the innocent from the guilty; and to make such a law as will ensure the punishment of the last, while it leaves room for the first to escape. For some of these men no punishment was too severe; whilst others, timid, deluded, or ignorant, merited the compassion of their fellow-citizens. The case of the emigrants will never be rightly understood, if we do not attend to it—that from the beginning of the revolution, and
much

much more in the later stages of it, as already stated, there has existed so great a struggle between two parties, as merits well to be termed a *civil war*, under the appearance of *peace*. I shall have occasion to illustrate this idea more fully soon; and shall only now observe, that, if this be true, we shall not be so much surprised at the severities against the emigrants. For in all ages and nations, those citizens who abandoned their country in the hour of her danger, or who took up arms against her cause, have constantly been treated with greater rigour than foreign foes. The enmity of fellow-citizens has ever been more inveterate than that of strangers, in proportion as their love is greater, and their common duties more binding.

I have already noticed, as a change perhaps necessary in the circumstances, the institution of military juries, and other regulations irreconcilable with the ancient system of discipline. It was feared at the time, that indiscipline might be the consequence of these alterations; and in fact, in a certain degree, this has been the case. Who then could have imagined that the French legislators would have been so imprudent as to increase this evil, by decreeing that the soldiers should choose all their inferior officers? Every man of experience in military affairs saw the inevitable evils that would follow from this rash measure. All the generals complained of it; and the judicious Camus, commissary to the army in the Netherlands, told the Convention, on his return, that, if they did not repeal this decree, they would never have order or discipline in the army. For, added he, the majority of those who are elected officers obtain their elevation by promising to relax discipline, and maintain

maintain themselves in their place by keeping their word.

The French have been censured for a want of regard to religion ; but, if this censure be just of some individuals amongst them, it does not therefore hold of the National Convention, who in all their public conduct, have respected the religion of their country. With respect to their assembling on Sundays, it has been already observed, that the urgency and importance of their affairs might apologise for that measure ; and it is carefully to be noticed, that Sunday in Catholic countries was never observed with the same strictness as in England, far less with the rigidity of the Presbyterians in Scotland. Such a mode of keeping Sunday does not form a part of the religion of this people : and therefore they are not to be censured for not complying with it.

Mr. Burke has said a great deal about the public profession of atheism made by Jacob Dupont, an obscure deputy of the Convention, whom I never heard of before nor since. There are absurd and thoughtless men in all public assemblies. There are atheists in England as well as in France. Nor is Scotland without its proportion, if we may believe a late physician of Edinburgh, who says, "*In hac urbe, ubi de Summi Numinis existentia indies et acriter disputandum est* *." But, whatever there may be in this, it is certain that the loose and imprudent expressions made use of by some individuals in France on the subject of religion, were industriously circulated in foreign nations, and did infinite injury to the revolution, by giving colour to

* In this city, where the existence of the Supreme Deity is daily and warmly disputed.

to the pretext, that the French had thrown off all regard to religion. As La Source justly observed, the member who proposed to deprive all the Catholic clergy of their salaries, and Jacob Dupont, who made a public profession of atheism in the Convention, did more harm to the cause of France than the armies of Austria and Prussia. These men were deeply mistaken, if they thought that the majority of the nation were of their opinion: they were deeply mistaken if they believed that even the inhabitants of the corrupt metropolis were ripe for the rejection of all religion. We are not, Madam, to judge of the Parisians as most of the English do, from a few people of fashion with whom they have been acquainted. We must speak of the *Bourgeois*, and of the great mass of the people. Almost the whole of them are still believers; and those even who have no reason to give for their faith are *afraid not to believe*. In many, early prejudices continue to oppose the decisions of matured reason; in others, relaxation of morals, by increasing fear, has augmented, instead of diminishing superstition. In all great corrupt cities there is much religion, because there is much fear.

I pass to some smaller imprudences, which have furnished ground for censure on the French legislators. Their blameable haste to *act* has often deprived them of the time needful to *plan* well; and hence obliged them to diminish their dignity, by undoing what they had done. And they have always attempted so much at once, that they have had no leisure to explain, in many cases, the reasons of their conduct. To quote but one instance—To how many severe and ill-grounded censures have they not exposed themselves for want of taking pains enough to explain what they meant by the term

EQUALITY;

EQUALITY; and to shew that they confined it to *equality of rights*, or, in other words, that all were equal in the eye of the law, and that all had a title to *equal justice*! Hence the most absurd prejudices were propagated respecting this phrase. It was pretended, that it was meant to equalize all fortunes; a measure that we know, if it were practicable, could not be kept up for a single week, nor for a single day, since, even in twenty-four hours, industry, exertion, and virtue would obtain some predominance over idleness, inactivity, and vice. Some amongst us imagined themselves wise, when they pointed out the absurdity of calling men equal, since by nature they were totally different in strength and talents; as if any one could be so absurd as to contend for equality in that ridiculous application of the term. Finally, in England societies were instituted to suppress *levellers*, as they were termed, although in fact and truth no such persons existed.

While I mention this, I cannot help recollecting an ingenious illustration of the argument by Mr. Garat. "Every body in France," says he, "knows well, that those troops of weak or ignorant princes, of whom history transmits to us the names, and who, from the height of their thrones, have made the effects of folly descend on the heads of their people, were very far from being equal in talents to those men of rare and exalted genius, who, in the silence and obscurity of their cabinets, have enlightened the world. We all know that James II. had neither the soul of Sydney, nor the philosophy of Locke. Nobody would have suspected Lewis the Fifteenth of writing Montequieu's Spirit of Laws. But *equality of rights* is quite a different affair."

Minuter

Minuter circumstances have also contributed their share in disgusting English observers of the French revolution. The want of order in the National Assembly—the indecent noise and confusion—the licentious applauses of the tribunes appeared shocking to Englishmen, accustomed to the dignity and regularity generally preserved in the House of Commons. It is true, in their censures relative to this, they did not make sufficient allowance for the peculiar character of the French nation, nor for the interesting nature of the subjects they had to discuss. They did not consider that they were comparing the calm progress of an old established government in a time of profound peace, with the agitated movements of a revolution in a nation at war; and where every day produced discussions that roused all the passions, by opposing all prejudices, and attacking all interests. Tranquil spectators of the storm, they would have had the mariners caught in the middle of the tempest, preserve the same composure as they did in viewing it securely from the shore!

I could shew, in several other respects, that sufficient allowance has not been made for the peculiar genius of the French nation, in the censures passed on it in England. The French are a lively, impetuous, and irritable nation; and their revolution is marked with their character. It has the faults of it and the virtues of it. I observe advertised in the newspapers a work of Mr. Arthur Young, entitled, “The Example of France a warning to England.”—The subject is copious; and when treated by this able and ingenious writer, must form an interesting publication. I would only observe, that, had you even a revolution in England (which God forbid should ever be necessary!), it would

not—it *could* not be such a one as the French revolution. For the men and the circumstances are totally dissimilar. You have not in England the same mass of abuses to change—you have not the same mass of folly and vice to struggle against—your people are neither so generally ignorant nor ferocious as the French populace—and, what is above all in your favour is, that you have not amongst you that shocking *inequality* which disfigured human society in France. There mankind were all in extremes; excessively exalted or excessively debased; and the people, once delivered from the tyranny of the great, having neither friend, counsellor, nor confidant, abandoned themselves to the wanderings of their own ignorance or passions. In England, on the contrary, there is a long series of classes of well-informed and worthy men, in the middling ranks of society, who connect the rich with the poor, and the men of large property with those who have none. In France the question was, whether certain princes and dukes, or whether the lowest of the people should govern the country. And, whether the first or the last obtained the predominance, there was danger of tyranny. The two classes were too far distant to place confidence in each other.

There is another remark, which I think it very important to make in this place. The example of France, though in many respects implacable, will certainly, however, be often applied to England; and deductions will be made from it, that may produce very serious consequences. If France does not aid us in advancing our liberty, let us at least take care that she does not furnish the means of depriving us of part of what we have. Let the real patriots of England be on their guard. Let us

us beware of thinking, that, because a corrupt or frivolous people were unfit for a system of extensive liberty, that therefore such a system is bad; or, to put the case more accurately, let us beware of concluding, that, because a people degraded by despotism were unfit to be all at once entrusted with freedom, that therefore it might not have been safely conferred on them, and their condition rendered more happy by it, if they had been conducted to it by a gradual and wise preparation. It is too common to reason from abuses against the proper use of things. We have seen the licentiousness of a people: but let us guard against drawing arguments from it to increase the power of monarchs.

This letter has extended much beyond the limits I originally designed.—I must now hasten to a conclusion, and only mention in a cursory manner the other objects that remain to be treated.

If I had more leisure, I would have pointed out, amongst other causes of the erroneous judgments of our countrymen respecting the French revolution, their confounding the *agents* with the *principles* of it.—The principles were often pure, when the agents were most depraved. On many occasions, when Englishmen were railing against France, an intelligent man might have replied to them: “You are only painting the vices of Marat or Orleans; but Heaven, which accomplished useful ends by Borgia and Catiline, may also promote a system of wisdom and justice by means of Orleans and Marat.

I should have shewn that many, if not all, of the evils of the French revolution may be traced up to the effects of the old corrupting system of government. That system had destroyed the morals
of

of the people, and rendered them unfit for liberty. As all things under it were managed by intrigue, it had created a general system of SUSPICION. That suspicion has caused the ruin of the best concerted measures ; for, as no man trusted his neighbour, no body of men acted in concert, nor could any public functionary preserve for any length of time the confidence of those under him. Eternal denunciations were made against those entrusted with the executive part of government ; and all of them were readily believed by the people. Hence the constant changes of ministers, and the eternal accusations of generals, and other public functionaries. Many of these men, who were originally honest, appear to have been forced into bad conduct, by having their patience worn out with endless inculpations. Hence the want of general union so necessary at such a period. Hence the multiplied and absurd severity of laws against emigrants, conspirators, traitors, &c. &c. Mr. Burke, to whom I am ready to render all justice where I can, justly remarked, that there was too much suspicion manifested even in the first constitution. It was true : but he did not penetrate into the cause of it ; or rather it would not have suited his argument to bring that cause forward. The truth is, that suspicion was not the fault of the new system, but of the old, which, by corrupting all, had cut up the roots of confidence, and rendered every man afraid of another.

The mass of folly and vice introduced into the nation by the ancient system furnished a terrible obstacle to the revolution, and might alone have been sufficient to account for its failure. Never before had the world seen despotism united with so high a degree of civilization. Hence depravity was carried

ried to a degree unknown in modern times, and in European climates. All the great towns were more or less debauched; and Paris was a sink of vice and corruption. A body thus diseased was not to be cured by ordinary means. Humanity would have poured the balm of *reform* into the ulcers; but Reason pronounced them too corrupt to be cured. "Ense recidendum" was her awful sentence when she lifted up the sword of revolution.

If any proof had been wanted of the degree of folly and depravity to which the old system had reduced the principal classes of society in France, what could be a more striking one than the conduct of the emigrant princes and their adherents in Germany? Observe what kind of life they led there. Exposed to the greatest danger, and to the chance of losing all that was dear to them in life, they were unable to forget the dissipation of the ancient court: they revived in exile all its follies and all its vices.—Coblentz became a miniature of Versailles; and the men who had their character, their fortune, their life itself at stake, were occupied, just as they used to be at the old court, in intrigues, and quarrelling about mistresses. The same thing happened in Italy, where even the licentious Romans were scandalized at the vices of the refugee priests. If similar things have not been observed of those in England, it is because the established decency of our manners has scared them from shewing their real character.

Such were the men which the old government of France had formed, and such the men who were to be *re-made* and moulded to republican virtues. Our friends in England have not sufficiently attended to this. They have not reflected how difficult
it

it is to reform an old corrupt monarchy: they have forgotten that it is in fact a *new-birth*.

I have already hinted, that distant spectators, in judging of various parts of the French revolution, have not allowed sufficiently for the pressure of circumstances, perhaps the most extraordinary that ever occurred to a people. I will just mention a few of them:—

I. The inveteracy of a powerful aristocratic party, which operated from the very beginning of the revolution, and which has kept up an unceasing irritation amongst the people.

II. The manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, whose threats were ever present to the minds of the people.

III. The conspiracy of kings, formed at Pilnitz; an association of a new kind, as terrible as it was monstrous. Our countryman, Dr. Parr, has left me nothing to add to his eloquent reflections on the subject.

IV. That real civil war, which, under the name of peace, has existed in France since the beginning of the revolution, and openly broke forth in the latter periods of it. I promised to illustrate this more at large, but must defer so doing so till another opportunity.

I could enumerate several other circumstances, if my leisure permitted me to enter into details. I must, however, farther observe, that our friends in England, in judging of the French revolution, do not seem in many cases to have allowed even for the ordinary weaknesses of human nature. It has always been the foible of man, to run from one extreme to another—Grant that the French have,
for.

for the moment, run from despotism to licentiousness—they have committed the common fault of our nature. Let us reason of them as we would do of ourselves, and let us allow them time to return to the just medium.

No man is more shocked than I am at the crimes and horrors that have taken place in France, or to speak more justly in Paris, during the revolution. But most of them have been the work of villains, who profited of a time of public confusion to work out their own infernal purposes. Most of them have therefore no real connection with the revolution; and with respect to the few that have, it must be remembered, that a period of revolution is not to be judged of by the rules that apply to seasons of peace and tranquillity. Great public commotions, such as those in France, bring forth all the passions.—If the French revolution has been stained with scenes of vice and cruelty, it has also exhibited some of the noblest examples of generosity and virtue that any age or nation can boast of. It has exhibited acts that rival those of Greece and Rome: and surely France merits some indulgence from mankind, if, with men formed under the old despotism, she has not been able, all at once, to carry into practice the sublimest principles of justice and wisdom ever adopted by mankind. Her errors will pass away, her crimes are momentary, and will be forgotten; her *principles* will be immortal, and her declaration of the rights of man will perish only with the human race.

Revolutions exhibit man acting on a great scale: hence they produce great virtues, and at the same time great vices. Three years of confusion form a vast period in the life of an individual; but they
make

make only a point in the *life of a nation*. They make, indeed, almost an imperceptible point, if that nation is considered as a part of the great whole, and as affecting, by its conduct, the future fate of Europe, and of the world. The revolutions of all other nations, our own and that of America excepted, have done nothing for mankind. What signifies it to the world who is despot in Turkey, who vanquishes or is vanquished in Persia; who is Pope of Rome? The contest then is about the *masters*, but the *system* continues the same. In France, the contest has been about *principles*, and these the most important, the most sacred, the most essential to the happiness of man. Let France be arraigned before the tribunal of the human race—she must plead guilty to many charges—but she will still appear a meritorious criminal. For who before her declared aloud, in the name of twenty-five millions of men, to attending Europe, those truths which lay concealed in the works of a few philosophers? Who, before her, dared to combat *all* errors, and braving every prejudice, through good report and evil report, published the complete manifesto of the neglected rights of human kind!!

But I must conclude. What I have already written, or may farther write, will, I am persuaded, find favour with you, and with a few more of the well-informed and reflecting: but I do not expect that such ideas will meet with general approbation, at this moment of agitation and prejudice. For my part, I am prepared for censure; but I entreat you to witness, that I appeal from the public judgment of 1792, to that of 1799. I might make the period shorter, but I am unwilling to be thought enthusiastic in my expectations, and therefore have
stated

stated seven years. I will add, that certain persons will do well to be moderate in their triumph at this moment, lest their sentiments and declarations should be recorded and produced at a time when they may be less suitable than they are just now.

Whether France will finally be able to extricate herself from an intestine, as well as external war, which now assail her at once—whether she will be able to support her republic; or fatigued with anarchy, repose herself in limited monarchy; or finally, overwhelmed by her foes, be forced to accept that constitution which they choose to give her, are points that surpass my powers to decide. Were I to conjecture, I would say, that she will succeed in maintaining her own freedom, but not in communicating it to her neighbours. But should she even be overpowered by her enemies, and should continental despots wish to load her with the most galling chains, I cannot forget, Madam, that Britain is concerned in this transaction! And this recollection cheers my mind; for a free and generous people cannot condemn twenty-five millions of men to be slaves: No: The severest sentence that England can suffer to be pronounced, even on her rival, would be, “Let France be delivered from the dominion of a ferocious mob—let her be delivered from anarchy, and restored to reason and lawful sway!” Thus, terminate how it will, I trust the French revolution will promote the good of France, and this prospect consoles me amidst the present evils.

The French revolution began in wisdom; but what wise men begin well, fools often by their interference spoil at the end. The French legislators borrowed from ignorance only the strength of its arm; they certainly never intended to make use of its

its disordered *head*. One revolution therefore sufficed all wise men; but the court forced a second one, and then all was confounded. The people were called upon to judge, when they had no means of judging. They had already *acted*, and their honest energy ought then to have ceased. Deprived of the means of obtaining knowledge, by the degradation into which the ancient system of civil policy had placed them, they ought not to have been placed in the rank of political judges.

It is much too rash to conclude, that the cause of France is lost—the probability is still in its favour; and were it otherwise, Madam, I should say, “*Victrix causa placuit diis, sed victa Catoni* *.” Mean must be his mind, and low his thoughts, who can regret having espoused such a cause, or wish that he had taken the side of corrupt politicians, instead of that of a people struggling for freedom, the first gift of Heaven; *cum quibus errare malim, quam cum illis recte sentire* †.

When I said that the French revolution began in wisdom, I admitted that it came afterwards into the hands of fools. But *the foundation was laid in wisdom*. I must intreat you to mark that circumstance; for if even the superstructure should fall, the foundation would remain. The BASTILLE, though honoured by Mr. Burke with the title of the *king's castle* (a shocking satire on every humane and just prince), will never be rebuilt in France; and the declaration of the rights of man will remain eternal, as the truths it contains. In the early ages of the world, the revolutions of states, and the

* The victorious cause pleased the gods, but Cato was for the vanquished.

† With whom I would rather err, than think rightly with the others.—A hyperbolical expression of Cicero.

the incursions of barbarians, often overwhelmed knowledge, and occasioned *the loss of principles*: but since the invention of printing has diffused science over Europe, and accumulated the means of extending and preserving truth, PRINCIPLES can no more be lost. Like vigorous seeds committed to the bosom of the fertile earth, accidental circumstances may prevent their vegetation for a time, but they will remain alive, and ready to spring up at the first favourable moment.

What then is the conclusion of the whole matter? This, surely, that PRINCIPLES are never to be abandoned, however unsuccessful may be the attempt to carry them into *practice*. We in England, however, have had practical experience of the good effects of right principles: our maxims of liberty have proved their intrinsic worth, by counteracting even the natural defects of our country. They have made, as Addison happily expresses, "our bleak rocks and barren mountains smile;" and on the careful preservation of these maxims depends the continuance of the blessings they have procured us. But I must conclude:

" O Liberty! expand thy vital ray,
 " O'er the dark globe diffuse celestial day;
 " Glad distant regions by thy blissful voice,
 " 'Till India's wilds, and Afric's sands rejoice;
 " Thy spirit breathe, wide as creation's space;
 " Exalt, illumine, inspire the human race;
 " As heaven's own æther through expansion whirl'd,
 " Attracts, sublimates, and animates the world *."

Thus wishes a worthy member of the British Senate, and such are your wishes and mine.

ADIEU.

* Courtenay.

CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE

REFERRED TO IN PAGE 120, VOL. II.

The correspondence between Pache, the Minister of War, and Dumourier, has unveiled this mystery. Some extracts from this correspondence are subjoined, which will explain the cause of the late events.

— I AM quite averse to every offensive and external war, particularly every war which carries us beyond our natural limits, that is to say, the Alps and Pyrennees on the south, and the Rhine on the north and north-east. I should have been even averse to the invasion of the Low Countries, if I did not see, in the liberty of our neighbours, a barrier more solid, and much less expensive, than that of fortified places.

Correspondence of Dumourier with the Minister of War, published in Paris, Nov. 10, 1792.

— GENERAL Cuffine is an excellent foldier; he has given proofs of it: but he shewed only the physical force of war; he has perceived neither its moral tendency nor its political results. His intention was to assist us in clearing the Low Countries; but

but his conduct and his intention are at utter variance; for, if we go into Germany, if we even cross the Rhine, we shall know neither where we are going, nor how we shall return. Our war will become a war of adventures, ruinous both in men and money.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Nov. 10, 1792.

— You have asked my advice on the plans of Custine; I have sent them to you: you inform me that you approve them: nevertheless, by the orders which you have given Bournonville, and by your last letters, it appears to me that you have followed a plan totally opposite. I have just learned that Frankfort is taken by assault by the Austrians. Whether the news be true or false, it is not less true that Custine has strangely committed himself. Le Brun sends to me, on the 30th, that he was very uneasy: it is not less true, that the egregious fault of not taking Coblenz may cost us all the success of this war, because there is no possible means of re-union between the army of Alsace and that of Belgia.

Correspondence of Dumourier.

— I SEE with concern, that you disapprove the contract made the 8th of this month, by the commissaries in chief, Malus and Simon of Dunkirk, for the subsistence of the army in Brabant. I must observe, that it is by means of this contract that the army has been served since that period: if it had not been so, it would have perished with hunger.— At the moment which was to decide the fate of Belgia and the success of our arms, the magazines were empty; no subsistence; resources distant and uncertain;

uncertain; and consequently the motions of the army impossible. You will not take it amiss that I have concluded, on terms very advantageous for the republic, a contract which has prepared the success of my campaign, and without which I should have had no food for my army, nor forage for my cavalry.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Nov. 23, 1792.

—Decrees of accusation were made against these commissaries, at the motion of Cambon.

THE General (Labourdonnaye) has behaved himself more as a conqueror than a friend; he has confiscated the public revenues to the profit of the French nation. His agents threaten the towns with military execution, as the Prussians did in Champagne. I beg that he may be recalled to his former station, where, if he hurts me personally, he will not be able to injure the interests of the republic.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Nov. 27, 1792.

—I own to you, that had you purposely meant to disorganize the army, and arrest its march, you could not have chosen a more disastrous method than depriving me of two commissaries known by their abilities and their honesty, and of an undertaker able and full of resources.

I am persuaded beforehand that these citizens will clear themselves from the imputations which are laid against them, and which are a part of those odious conspiracies which I have already denounced to the minister of war. But it is not less true, that all my resources are taken from me, and I am placed

placed in a situation to lose the campaign, by being thus deprived of the only men who were able to provide for the support of the army. I charge Colonel Westerman with the care of the citizens Malus and Lessagnac, who, so far from fearing, have requested me to be sent as expeditiously as possible to confound their enemies.

Dumourier to the Minister of Justice,

—It is time for me to develope all the energy of my character, and to display all the indignation which I feel against any thing which betrays the expedition with which I am charged, and the means which are used to thwart and ruin it. You have given me as an assistant General Bourdonnaye, who takes every method to bring civil war into this country, to expose our weak garrisons to be murdered, and to cause our nation to be abhorred. This is not all: I have been promised, and you yourself have done it in your letters, all the means of subsistence, camp equipage, clothing, hospitals; and I see nothing but partial supplies arriving, so that half my army want necessaries. You have promised me money; I have received none, and the paymaster of the army who is arrived has brought but very little. — —

Thus it is that 60,000 men, beyond their frontiers, are delivered up to want and disorder. If after all the obstacles which I meet with on the part of the French, they accomplish their end of ruining the expedition, on which depends the glory and safety of my country; when I shall arrive at Liege, when I shall have placed on the Meuse the army which I command, and when, by the position of its quarters, the conquest of the Low Countries shall be assured, I will send to the Convention my
dismissal,

dismissal, with my reasons to avoid being personally attainted by the plots with which they seek to ruin all my operations, and to hinder myself from becoming the instrument of tyranny or of avarice.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Nov. 27, 1792.

—LIEUTENANT-GENERAL Egalité, who has my permission to go to Paris on a family affair important and affecting, conveys to you these dispatches. — — — — —

I own to you that, in general, this system of denunciation is established with so dreadful a rapidity, that it cannot but alarm the best citizens; because it nourishes suspicions and animosities, which poison all the mildness and fraternity of this rising republic; throws us into a series of proscriptions, which take their situations from the agents of the republic before they are judged, and which substitute the accusers in place of the accused, oftentimes to reward them for a calumny, or for a denunciation built on very slight grounds.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Liege Nov. 29, 1792.

—THE army diminishes daily in a most alarming degree: I have not more than 21,000 men under my command: there are few battalions that amount to 300 men, and companies are reduced to seven or eight. The decree which declares the country out of danger, has made the greatest part of the volunteers think that they are free to go: a great number have departed without leave: amongst those that remain, the greatest part, and almost whole battalions, having made their declaration

tion two months since, demand their dismissal on the first of December, that is to say, to-morrow; and if the National Convention do not take very speedy measures, I shall not be able, according to the terms of the decree, to retain any.

The revolution is very far from being effected in Brabant. The cabal of Prussia, Orange, and Vandernoot, of the priests and the states, reigns over three-fourths of the country, &c. — —

— — — You will observe also, that I am very far from being assured of the Dutch. The opening of the Scheldt, cannot but displease them extremely. I should not be astonished if England and Prussia should excite the Stadtholder to declare his resentment. There is a garrison of 9000 men in Maestricht, and preparations are making which indicate at least ill-will. I cannot engage to march forward before I know the resolution of the Dutch, for if they fall on my left, whilst the Austrians fall on my right, the army of the republic would be lost without resource, and the liberties of Liege and the Low Countries would be ruined for ever.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Liege Nov. 30, 1792.

— — — It is thus that, contrary to the intentions of Cambon, I am obliged to be the leader and provisioner of the army I command: it is thus that it is without bread, forage, or money. Judge what ought to be my indignation when I see that all these objects are presented falsely to the National Convention; when I see the administration totally disorganized, and replaced by men who themselves acknowledge their incapacity to render any service; when I see the army wanting every thing, and becoming the victim of thoughtlessness and

avarice; when I see, finally, all my plans thwarted, my campaign perhaps ruined, and my reputation attacked by men guilty themselves or deceived by others.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Decem. 2d, 1792.

—It seems that for some time past all your decisions tend to disorganize the army, and reduce it to despair. — — When the decree passed which takes from the general the nomination to military employ, I submitted without hesitation: but I own that your bureau have made a horrid abuse of it. It is thus that the army I command is stuffed with adjutants and co-adjutants, who know not a word of their trade. Amongst others, they have sent us an adjutant, a pupil of Mr. Vestries. I should have no objection to his profession, and should pass by his title, if he had as many brains in his head as he has suppleness in his joints and lightness in his heels. The intention of the decree has been, without doubt, not to leave to the generals the means of making too many creatures in the army by their nominations; but they ought at least to be consulted for the higher commands and places of trust; and especially the choice ought to fall on officers known by the soldiers, and who have their confidence.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Decem. 2d, 1792.

—You have broken all my measures by a false parsimony, by a narrow niggardliness which will fall back on the nation, and ruin both you and your agents. When I have come to this open declaration of war with you, it is not against you personally

ally that I declare. But I have been the scape-goat of guilty men, who have reduced the army I command to the most wretched extremities. You have presented false statements to the National Convention and my friends: recollect yourself speedily; you will be responsible both for the loss of time, and the ruin of a victorious army.

Correspondence of Dumourier,
Decem. 7th, 1792.

—You tell me you are not a military man. But this excuse is of little avail, since you ought to consult me or follow my plans: you or your colleagues have committed an irreparable fault. I acknowledge the virtues of the citizen Roland. When you shall read to him my letter in the council, he will be sensible of the great injury he has done the republic from his little suspicions respecting victorious generals, and his pretended austerity on my moral character. It is not by little household virtues, or narrow suspicions, that the affairs of a great nation are to be conducted. All the precautions that have been directed against me, might have been directed against a little ambitious intriguer like la Fayette, &c.

Dumourier's letter, dated the 8th of December, contains his reasons at length for not obeying the order of the Executive Council, which decreed, that the army should not go into winter quarters till the enemy had been pushed beyond the Rhine. The impossibility of executing it is apparent from the extracts already given. In this letter he details them more at length: the picture he draws is affecting—"Above all, I declare to you, that the troops have suffered so much, that they are entirely

discouraged, that their misery has destroyed all ideas of discipline.—I owe to my country the truth.—I protest against the decree of the council, because it is not to be executed, and chimerical.—With this opinion, if the council persist, it would be impossible to charge me with the execution.” — —

Dumourier's Correspondence with the Commissaries,
Dec. 10, 1792.

CITIZENS Commissaries, you see daily yourselves how rapid the disorganization of this army is: how guilty are the men who under a false pretence of economy have broken contracts, which you are now seeking to re-establish, and which only afford us the means of subsistence from day to day. It will cost many millions to repair, and that imperfectly, the evil which they have done. —

I demand justice for the crime they have committed against the Nation, in reducing this unhappy army to a situation more disastrous than if it had lost battles; and depriving it, by a monopolizing infamous system, of the great resources which the Low Countries offered of every kind. — —

The avarice of the monopolists has led them to make use of you to break the contracts; which must now be re-established to hinder the army from dying expressly of hunger. As to your clothing, &c. your contracts are still worse. I can have shoes at Liege for three livres fifteen sous, and the shoes are excellent; and you send me detestable shoes, that cost seven or eight livres. Your capotes cost fifty or sixty francs, and do not last two months; whilst the citizen Malus, on whom your bureaux throw all their own faults, would have found here a stuff more solid and warm, and which would have cost only from twenty-five to thirty.

Every

Every day renders our position more alarming. What can I do with our great artillery, where shall I find horses? What shall I do with the army itself? without straw, with tents torn and rotten, without clothes or shoes at this instant. — —

My health is entirely ruined, as much by the fatigues of two campaigns, extremely rigorous, during which I have not spared myself more than the soldiers, as well as through chagrin and vexation; which have too much affected me, in seeing the destitute condition of my brave comrades. It is absolutely indispensable for me to take a little repose, being really indisposed, and having moreover my breast dangerously affected.

Correspondence of Dumourier to Pache,
Liege Decem. 18, 1792.

After reading this correspondence, of which these extracts form a part, the retreat of the French from the Low Countries, and the failure of the expedition against Holland, remain sufficiently accounted for. Dumourier's letter to the Convention, which fear or prudence hindered them from reading, but which he himself has published, will explain all the rest.

*Extracts from Dumourier's Correspondence with
Miranda.*

THE first letter, dated the 10th of January, contains a detail of the intended operations in Holland, which were to have begun with an attack on Zealand; but the project was laid aside by the advice of Miranda. Of the spirit of fraternization which was to have been promoted in the Low Countries,

tries, by an interchange of good offices, an extract from Dumourier's instructions will afford us a specimen.

You will go to Antwerp, you will be joined there by the Dutch patriots, who will bring you carts, and conduct you, knowing themselves the easiness of this expedition. The minister of marine gives orders to prepare furnaces, &c. in each of the three gun-boats, to fire with red hot balls. These three boats draw but little water, and will easily drive off the frigates (the English frigates) by the superiority of their fire and the heat of their shot. Take as a pretence for your journey to Antwerp the borrowing of eight millions of florins, which you ought to make there. As I have prepared it, exact this demand with severity, and inform this city, its clergy, and its merchants, that the French will no longer be the dupes of its malevolence; that they will levy by contribution what they should otherwise borrow; that you know who are the capitalists, and that you shall take from them, and leave them to arrange it with their fellow-citizens. Tell them that I am labouring to procure the repeal of the decree of the 15th of December. — — — Get a list of the rich; call them individually to the Hotel de Ville, keep them there, and do not release them till they have resolved to comply, either with good will or by compulsion. If it is with good will, take immediately two millions of florins for the expence of the expedition. If it is by compulsion, impose on one fifty thousand, on others more, others less, according to their rank; and order the payment in eight days, keeping them under guard. Do the same thing with the clergy, but separately from the merchants.

merchants. During this rigorous operation, which can alone save the French and Belgic armies, combine with the Dutch patriots the plan, &c.

Dumourier to Miranda, Paris Jan. 10.

— — — ALL depends on dispatch and secrecy.—I will unfold my plan from day to day: it is precipitate—because events press on us, and we have not a day to lose. Prepare it then without loss of time. If I find more obstacles here, whether they arise from the indecision of the executive council, from the slowness of committees, or the savage division of the factions, I will daily inform you of them. Finally, if no one will hear me, if suspicions, bad faith, the spirit of faction, niggardliness, more ruinous even than sordid, are placed between me and the salvation of my country, I will give in my dismissal, and weep in some other corner the fate of my blinded countrymen.

Dumourier to Miranda, Paris Jan. 10.

I THINK your plan extremely difficult to be executed, from the situation and absolute nakedness in which our armies and magazines at present are. If you would leave out of your plan the expedition into Zealand, it would be much more practicable, as far as I can see; and we should not have to commit ourselves with the naval forces of England and Holland, who would not fail to stop us at the beginning of our enterprize; having on our side no maritime forces to oppose to them.

Remember, General, that it was the Zealanders, with their boats, who first arrested the hitherto victorious land forces of the tyrant Philip; and moreover,

over, that Zealand will fall of itself when the rest shall be taken.

Miranda to Dumourier, Liège Jan. 13.

I THINK that if war be decided on between us, Holland, and England, we must only make a false attack on Zealand, and then seize on Maestricht, Venlo, Guelders, Emmerick, fall back on Nimeguen, and by the heights of Amersfort, hem Utrecht, gain the sluices of Moyden, where Marshal Luxembourg failed in 1672; and then we shall arrive without difficulty at Amsterdam. In this campaign, which must be necessarily expeditious, and which I have a long time meditated, we must reckon but little on the assistance of the patriots, and trust only to our own forces, and means of conquest.

Dumourier to Miranda, Paris Jan. 19.

I WILL not speak to you of the events of this country. I endeavour to prepare every thing as if I were to make the campaign; and it is still very possible that I shall not make it, for nothing is decided on, and certainly I will keep to the conditions, whatever may be the result.

Dumourier to Miranda, Paris Jan. 19.

The catastrophe of the 21st (the execution of the King) will probably make all the people of Europe our enemies. Here is what has been decided on with respect to this in the executive council.

We

We are yet uncertain what part England will take; and it is this resolution which shall determine our conduct with respect to Holland. The council, agreeably to the wishes (*apres le desir*) of the English and Dutch, have fixed on me to go to England as ambassador extraordinary, to have a categorical answer from this nation for peace or war. In consequence of this, orders have been given to our ambassador, Chauvelin, to return. To-morrow a secret agent will be sent, well known to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, to demand from both parties, that is, from the whole nation (*c'est a dire à la nation toute entiere*), a safe conduct for me, and the assurance of being well received, whatever be the success of my mission. As it is a yes or a no that I am going to demand, like Cato at Carthage—this mission will only last eight days.

A confidential person is sent to the Hague, to advise Lord Auckland and the Grand Pensionary Van Spiegel, to come to confer with me, agreeably to their own request (*selon leur propre demande*) on the frontier, between Antwerp and Breda, to begin a negociation. This little abode at Antwerp will give me time to receive the courier of the minister Le Brun, who will bring the answer from London. If this answer be categorical and friendly, as they yet flatter themselves, then I will return to Paris, to take my last instructions; or will go, according to the advice of the council, from Antwerp to Calais to embark. If, on the contrary, the answer be evasive or peremptory, I will attack Maestricht eight days after, &c.

Dumourier to Miranda, Paris Jan. 23.

WHEN

WHEN you shall have begun your expedition, and I my hardy enterprize, you will no longer be able to receive any orders from me; for our communication will be altogether interrupted, till we join again on the march which I shall make by Utrecht, when the revolution shall be made at Rotterdam and Amsterdam; where I shall not stop, in order to rejoin you more quickly, and disembarass you from your sieges, by the orders which I shall give, through the new republic, to the different commanders. I shall carry with me, most probably, a reinforcement of Dutch troops. If I do not completely succeed, I shall endeavour at least to take possession of Breda, and perhaps also of Bergen-op-Zoom, or Bois-le-duc, to cover our flanks till spring.

But the more daring my attack is, the more hope I have of success. If I were strong and had time, I would take a more methodical march. In the situation we are, we must astonish, and strike desperate strokes.

We undertake a business as difficult as it is audacious. Here it is that we may well say, Conquer or die! Our intimate friendship will smooth all difficulties—you are my faithful second, and I hope every thing from you. On this important occasion I regard our enterprize as the only means of saving the republic.

Dumourier to Miranda, Antwerp Feb. 11.

— — — THINK how important it is, my dear friend, that you should employ the Prussians, to hinder their march on me, who have but 15,000 men, and scarcely that; nevertheless, there is no going back. My van will depart the 18th, I shall follow

follow the 19th. Spread reports continually, through the army, that I am coming; and hasten to get together your artillery and your carriages, not to delay after you have taken Maestricht. It is on your speed to second me that depends the fate not only of Holland but of the republic, and the liberty of nations: for, if we do not succeed in our invasion of Holland, having neither the love of the Belgians, whom we have on the contrary exasperated against us, nor an army proper for the defensive, we shall be driven from the Low Countries with the same celerity as we rendered ourselves masters of it. Nothing but disgrace and consternation can follow this retreat, which cannot be otherwise than disorderly, and we shall have much difficulty to defend our own country. Such are our dangers, and it is only by the most daring courage, and the greatest rapidity, that we can save the republic.

Dumourier to Miranda, Antwerp Feb. 15.

IN six or eight days, at most, I hope to finish the bombardment of Maestricht, and, by a rapid march immediately after, to proceed on to Nimeguen with a body of 25,000 men, to join or support Dumourier, who will have penetrated into Holland on the other side, according as we are agreed. I cannot help foreseeing great difficulties in all these enterprizes; but I hope that we shall surmount them, if time or chance be any way favourable to us.

Miranda to the Minister of War, Bournonville,
Liege, Feb. 17.

THE

THE delays which I experience put me out of all patience, and would still more so, if your letter of the 18th did not prove to me that you are experiencing the same. This justifies the idea that I have always had, that the declaration of war was too precipitate. The negociation ought to have been spun on till I was ready to enter Holland, and besiege Maestricht.

Dumourier to Miranda, Antwerp Feb. 19.

DUMOURIER writes to Miranda, from Groot Zorndort, February 22, that he is in full expedition; that he has blockaded Bergen-op-Zoom; and on the 26th he writes from Zevenbuden, that Klundert had been taken in the night, and expresses his hopes of the effect that the news of the surrender of Breda will occasion, and determines on the attack of Williamstadt and Gertrudenburg the next day and the day after. He concludes this letter—
 “ Thus, I hope, that, before the month of May, we shall have at least 25,000 Belgian infantry to join our army. The volunteers will come in crowds to join us, when they shall be informed of our success. I hope that we shall be able to get together in this corner 150,000 men, with whom I will amuse myself in playing some monkey tricks (*a faire quelques singeries*) with the despots who are attacking us. Adieu, my dear comrade! make a good fire, drink hard, take care of your health, and be merry.”

OUR dream is finished in Holland. My dear General, what I have foreseen has happened. The enemies have attacked Lanoue in his cantonments right and left: he took his field of battle before Aix-la-Chapelle, but he has been forced. — — —
 May that Providence which watches over France, have

have hindered both you and your troops from embarking. Fly hither! I declare that if you do not come, I am in no condition to command such troops in such a situation. You recollect what I told the minister when he ordered me to take your place during your absence. It is clear, that the expedition into Holland cannot any longer take place, if the siege of Maestricht should be raised. In any case you can be here in twenty-four or thirty hours.—Fly! I repeat it—you will yet be in time to decide on what is to be done.—Fly hither! send troops to Mechlin, and you will have time, at your arrival, to decide on what shall be done with the army which has taken Breda.

Valence to Dumourier, Liege March 2.

P. S. "Though you should wish to continue your project into Holland, the plan of the campaign must be changed, and you only can do it. Minutes are ages."

FIER républicain, mon frere, mon ami! forget your vexations, celebrate in your army the taking of Gertrudenburg, which capitulated to-day at half past four o'clock. I hope the armies of the republic will take courage, and excite each other to a noble emulation. Gertrudenburg covered with inundations, almost inaccessible, defended by numerous forts and a dreadful artillery, with a garrison of Swiss, held out thirty-six hours against French impetuosity and the genius and talents of Arcon. It is the key of Holland, by which I am going to attack it.

You judge, my friend, that I am farther than ever from abandoning a plan which will give me money, ammunition, subsistence and allies; a plan which

which will save the Low Countries, and France into the bargain.

See what is to happen. The Prussians will abandon the Austrians, to go to the succour of the Hague and Amsterdam, where I will be before them. I will fight them at the head of those same Hollanders against whom I fight at present. You shall march back on Grave, which you shall take; then you shall attack Nimeguen, and then we will join hands. In the mean time Valence, having only to do with the Austrians, to whom he will be infinitely superior by the assistance that will come to him on every side, will hold them in check till you return to take them in flank, by Cleves and Juliers.

Dumourier to Miranda, Moerdick March 4.

IN comparing your two letters, my dear Miranda, you may imagine what service the second has rendered me; especially after the little hope left me by the first. Ready to pass the Moerdick; ready to conquer all the difficulties; ready to secure at length, for ever, the liberty and glory of my country, and of Holland. I saw every thing lost if you had not revived me, both on your own position and that of the spirit of the army: the letter of Valence had driven me to despair. I saw nothing but confusion, and not a single resource. Now all my hopes are reviving; dangers diminish as we have time before us; and if you answer me for your side, as I do not doubt, I have every hope of mine.

— — — My succours ought even to assist you, and it will be easy for you to persuade my brave brethren in arms, that, present or absent, I ought always to influence their conduct; tell them
what

what satisfaction I have in finding them worthy of the victories we are gaining together. Adieu, my friend, and more than ever my friend—May we be always worthy of each other! and believe that two or three good heads are sufficient to save are public.

Dumourier to Miranda, Moerdick March 7.

A MOTION leads me to depart: it is to give confidence to the Brabanters, and to bring them back to us by the trust they repose in me; and especially in lessening the tyranny and injustice which they have till now experienced. My resolution is taken with respect to this, whatever Cambon and his satellites may say.

Dumourier to Miranda, Moerdick March 9.

— — — THE last affair of Nerwinde is of much greater importance. — — — Our loss is considerable—in my division alone there was one general officer killed, and more than thirty others dead or wounded. Amongst others, my first aid-du-camp, whom you know, was killed at my side, and two thousand men nearly dead as well as wounded. By this you may compute the loss of the other divisions.

The enemy attacked us the next day with vigour, and obliged us to retire behind Tirlemont, and afterwards to Louvain, where I led back the centre and left division of the army. This check must produce the most fatal consequences for the fate of the Low Countries, and favour political affairs in general. I am astonished that Dumourier was guilty of so great an error.

There

There are many other things which I wish much to communicate to you, but I cannot trust them to paper. When I read your letter, in which you tell me, that the ramification of the plot lately discovered against our dear liberty extended even to the army, I thought you exaggerating and too timid. At present I am convinced there is a foundation for it, and I suspect more than one individual to be principal agents in our present reverses. I will tell you more, my friend: I have heard these very persons make indirect propositions, with an address which has alarmed my patriotism and my love of liberty. At length I see that we are agitated by infamous intrigues, which will finish by the loss of ourselves and the ruin of liberty. If it were possible for us to have an interview, either in your coming to the army yourself (which I think of the highest importance at this moment) or in my meeting you at any place on the road, I could communicate to you things which I think of the greatest importance for the safety of the republic, since it is only to you, whose integrity and principles, and pure love of liberty, are so well known, that I can freely and openly disclose my opinions. I even think that there is a cabal formed to get rid of me, as you were to have been got rid of previously to the 10th of August. I write not a word to the minister nor any one besides. I leave Dumourier and the others to make their reports as they please. I believe that virtue and truth are irresistible, and that the mask of intrigue will not withstand them.

Make a wise use of this letter, and return me an answer by the courier, &c.

Miranda to Petion, Louvain March 21.

F I N I S.

